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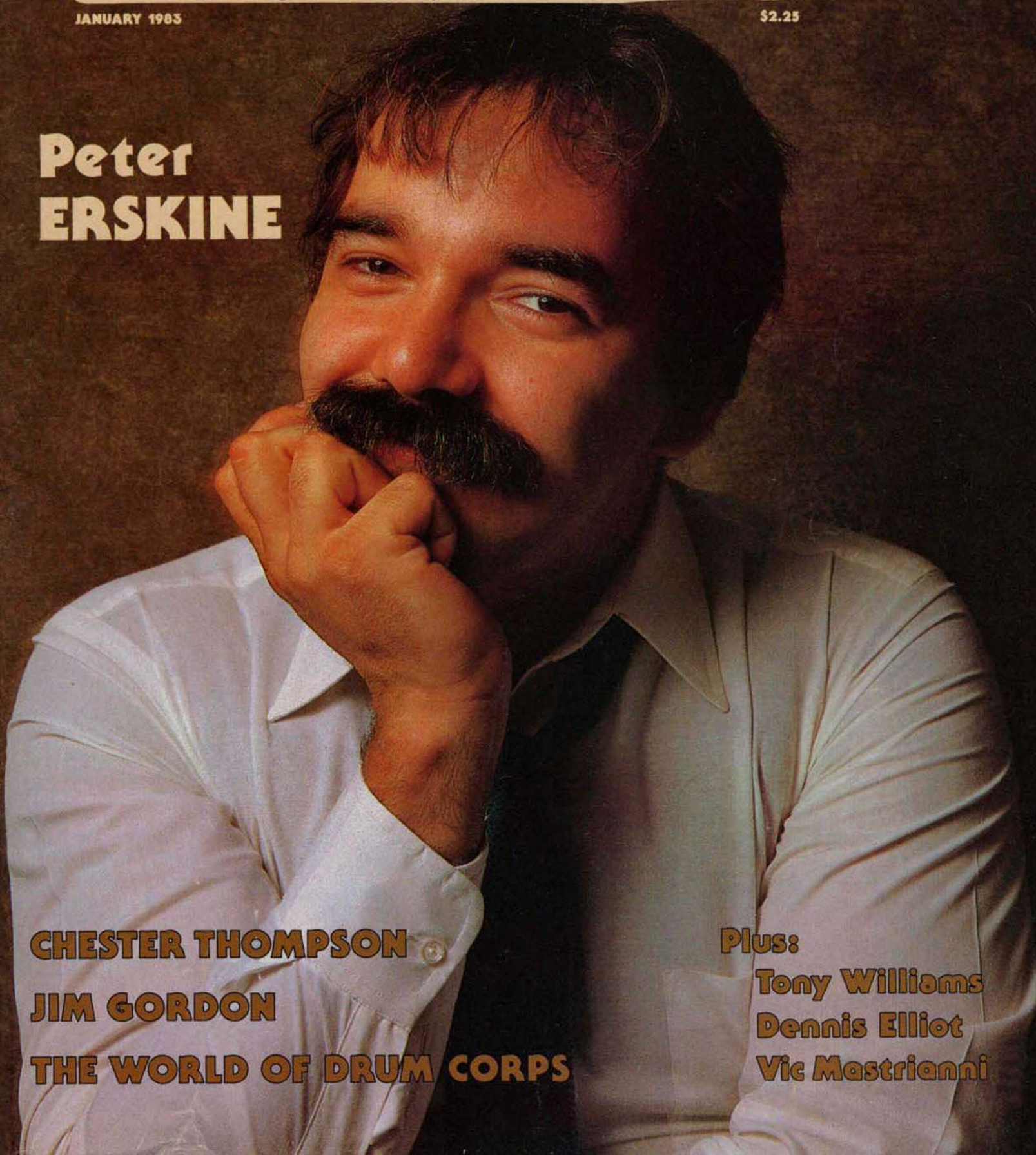

Peter ERSKINE

CHESTER THOMPSON

JIM GORDON

THE WORLD OF DRUM CORPS

Plus:

Tony Williams

Dennis Elliot

Vic Mastrianni

TAYLOR-MADE

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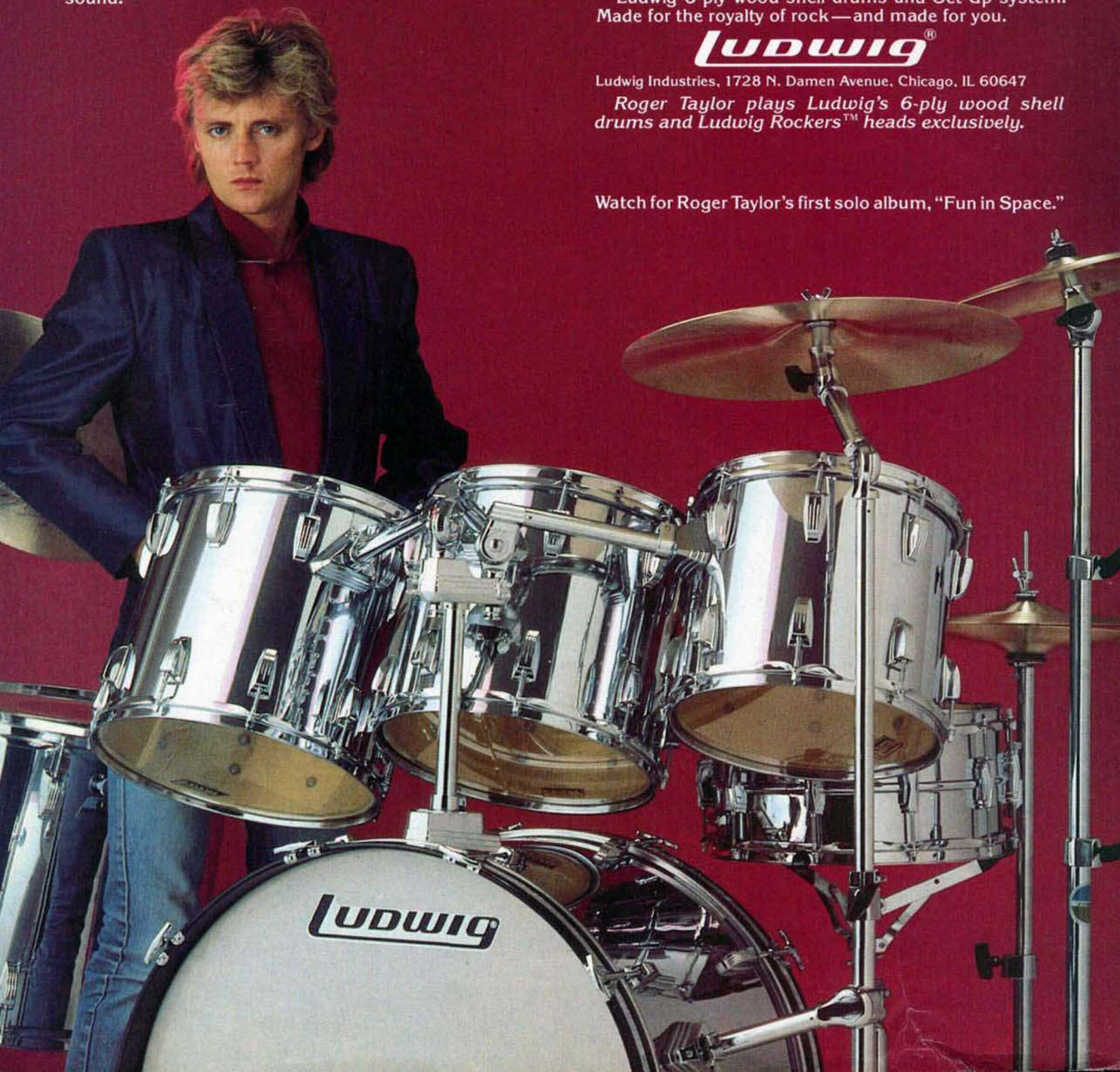

CONTENTS

Cover Photo by William Coupon

FEATURES

PETER ERSKINE
Over the past dozen years, Peter Erskine has continued to live up to the promise he showed back when he was the youngest person ever accepted at a Stan Kenton summer band camp. Here, Peter discusses how each phase in his career—including his recent departure from Weather Report to join Steps, and his first solo album—have brought him closer to being the kind of musician he wants to be.
by Rick Mattingly 8

CHESTER THOMPSON
Playing with Frank Zappa requires a special kind of drummer; playing with Weather Report takes a different type; playing for Genesis has yet another set of requirements. That Chester Thompson has been able to handle all three situations says a lot about his versatility and ability, which he comments on in this MD exclusive.
by Stanley Hall 14

MD FORUM:
Audio Engineers—on Miking & Recording Drums: Part II
by Mark Z. Stevens 18

JIM GORDON
One of the true legends of rock drumming, Jim Gordon began his studio career playing extra percussion parts beside such master drummers as Hal Blaine and Earl Palmer, and he began his touring career with the Everly Brothers. Gordon talks about how he went on to play and record with some of the biggest names in rock, while giving insights into the professional and personal aspects of his life.
by Scott Fish 22

INSIDE THE WORLD OF DRUM CORPS
by Jay A. Wanamaker 26

Photo by Joost Leijen

Photo by Paul Natkin/Photo Reserve

Photo by Eric Keltner

COLUMNS

EDUCATION

UNDERSTANDING RHYTHM
The Quarter-Note Triplet
by Nick Forte 32

CONCEPTS
Do Self-Taught Drummers Play Better?
by Roy Burns 56

ROCK 'N' JAZZ CLINIC
Hi-Hat Technique in Different Styles
by Sal Sofia 58

CLUB SCENE
Establishing Tempo
by Rick Van Horn 62

JAZZ DRUMMERS WORKSHOP
Studies in Style: Part II
Tony Williams
by Howard I. Joines 68

STRICTLY TECHNIQUE
Super Slow Practice
by Jim Watson 70

DRUM SOLOIST
Chuck Flores: "Es Tiempo"
by Skip Shaffer 86

DRIVER'S SEAT
Big Band Fills: A Two-Handed Approach
by Stanley Ellis 96

SHOW AND STUDIO
Notes On The Making of *Moving Pictures: Part II*
by Neil Peart 102

EQUIPMENT

PRODUCT CLOSE-UP
Accessories
by Bob Saydlowski, Jr, ... 36

SHOP TALK
Tips on Cleaning Cymbals
by Chris King 84

JUST DRUMS 114

PROFILES

PORTRAITS
DennisElliot
by Robyn Flans 38

UP AND COMING
Vic Mastrianni
by Robyn Flans 72

NEWS

UPDATE
by Robyn Flans 110

INDUSTRY HAPPENINGS 112

DEPARTMENTS

EDITOR'S OVERVIEW 2
READER'S PLATFORM 4
IT'S QUESTIONABLE 6
DRUM MARKET 106
ASK A PRO 108

EDITOR'S OVERVIEW

AN ENLIGHTENING EXPERIENCE

It all happened rather unexpectedly on a hot, humid Saturday evening in August as I drove home from a friend's house. Off in the distance, rising from above the walls of a nearby stadium, came the rhythmic cadence of muffled drums. I lowered the car radio to get a better listen to the captivating rhythms which grew louder as I drove closer. Though it was late—and hot—I was unable to resist. I parked the car, walked five blocks to the stadium, purchased a ticket and soon found myself among 4000 people madly cheering 100 musicians in multi-colored uniforms on the field below.

For a second, there were fleeting memories of high school band—but *only* for a second. It was obvious this was *no* high school marching band, but rather, one of seven competing drum corps in a Senior Drum & Bugle Corps competition, and like a great film spectacular, I was being pulled in by the excitement and grandeur of it all.

I watched as a line of buglers, hitting notes reminiscent of Maynard Ferguson, moved in varied formations among flag twirlers and color guard. Meantime, five middle-aged gentlemen, clad in short-sleeved shirts and ties, and toting clapboards and pencils, weaved their way in and around all the activity, presumably notating imperfections in what certainly appeared to be an absolutely perfect performance. At one point, the entire drum line marched directly towards the reviewing stand. The snare drums, timp-toms, marching mallet keyboards and timpani formed an arc across the 50-yard line. What followed was a dazzling display of precision snare drum execution, complex timpani and bass drum lines, coupled with the melodic interplay of mallet percussion. It was an audio/visual treat the likes of which I'd never seen. This was my unofficial initiation into the world of drum corps. Prior to that evening, it had been an area of drumming I'd heard about, but never paid much attention to.

What makes drum corps such an absorbing activity for musicians and non-musicians alike? For one thing, the music itself: the intensity of the bugles, the stirring arrangements, the drummers who execute with a technical proficiency that would make even Rich and Morello smile. It's also the people who follow drum corps; a growing number with an enthusiasm that rivals any New York Mets fan I've ever known. One is also in awe of the sheer dedication of the participants. Make no mistake, these are very serious young people who devote many hours to perfecting their performances for competition.

A year ago, I commissioned Jay Wanamaker, one of drum corps' most prolific exponents, to write an article on this special brand of percussion. Despite the fact that the majority of MD readers are set players, I felt a strong need to supply a sense of perspective regarding drum corps. The results of Jay's efforts are here in, *Inside The World Of Drum Corps.*

Interestingly, since the completion of the article, I've spoken with numerous, well-known jazz, rock and big band drummers, who likewise, have confessed a secret passion for drum corps. Several of these same people have also impresed upon me the fact that some of this country's leading rock and jazz drummers have roots in drum corps—Billy Cobham and Steve Gadd among them.

To any of those who may disagree with the concept of a drum corps article in MD, think of it if you will, as the planting of a seed. Read and learn, and then see if perhaps on some hot August evening, you don't find *yourself* following the sound of the muffled drums rising above the walls of some stadium. You may be pleasantly surprised at what you'll find. I know I was.

RS

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READER'S PLATFORM

ROCK HISTORY

I'm writing in regards to *The History of Rock Drumming* in the Aug./Sept. issue by Scott Fish. There is some misinformation and lack of facts regarding the New York scene in the '60s. The records you named in your article included quite a few on which I was the drummer, including "Spanish Harlem," "Up On The Roof," "Save The Last Dance For Me," plus many, many more. I can recall working with writers like Carol King and Gerry Goffin, Cynthia Weill and Barry Mann, Neil Sedaka, Bacharach and David, and Van McCoy among others. There were a lot of good rock drummers on the East Coast. I feel this article not only slighted me, but the entire East Coast recording scene in the '60s. I really hope you will do your best to rectify this gross oversight. I hope this letter is received in the spirit in which it was written.

Gary Chester
Suffern, N.Y.

Scott Fish replies: "This a condensed version of a very enlightening, informative letterfrom Mr. Chester. Iphoned him the day I received it and I've since completed an interview with Gary that highlights the New York scene in the '60s and the work of this amazing gentleman. Gary Chester was to the East Coast what Hal Blaine and Earl Palmer were to the West Coast. His exclusionfrom the Rock Drumming history was due only to thefact that I didn't know how prolific a drummer/musician he'd been. I'm glad the article gave Mr. Chester the incentive to write so that we could continue to expose the too-often ignored history of rock drumming."

HAL BLAINE

This is a personal thank you for forwarding my letter to Hal Blaine. Since then, I've had the pleasure of meeting Hal and watching him do some studio dates. The man is a true pro and a great person.

Shawn Weingart
Los Angeles, CA

BOOK PUBLISHING

As an employee in a publishing firm, I read with interest *How to Publish Your Own Drum Book,* in the April issue.

I would like to add that there is a very good book entitled *The Self-Publishing Manual,* by Dan Poynter, which goes into detail about dealing with printers, promotion and also explains about getting an ISBN number for the book, a Library of Congress catalog card number (only if your book is at least 100 pages), submitting for a listing in *Books In Print,* etc.

I found Mr. Brenner's article to be of excellent quality, which I can't say for all of the advice to authors that I read in magazines, and want to congratulate him on a job well done.

A.M.M.
Atlanta, GA

JOE MORELLO

I've been trying to learn Joe Morello's finger system. I was with Louie Bellson and Tommy Thomas two weeks ago and Louie explained the system to me, but I'd like to know how I can get in touch with Mr. Morello.

Randolph Baker
Clifton, NJ.

Editor's Note: You can write to Joe Morello in care of MD and we'll forward your letter.

BEING REALISTIC

I feel compelled to comment on the attack launched on Marty Morrell by reader Abbey Rader in your October issue. Aside from the fact that Mr. Morrell's interview didn't appear to be particularly "dreary" or "dirty," I get the impression that Mr. Rader would like to see all interviews in MD standardized to project nothing but a bed of roses to the aspiring young drummer. This would be equally horrendous because, like it or not, there are some less than perfect aspects of the field and it would be well for a young player to be aware of them so that he may deal with them properly when they arise. At the very least he should be able to cope with people in the field who are even more extreme than Marty is. It should also be noted that this so-called somber attitude has served as the impetus towards creativity for a great many musicians. Marty's candor is far more informative than any "gee whiz, it's great" cliches.

Ray Fransen
Kenner, LA

SAM ULANO

In reference to Danny L. Read's *Drumset Study Materials Listing:* Danny Read doesn't know anything about my work. I object to someone taking it for granted and just talking off the top of his bean. If you check my book *Simplified Coordination System,* there are only a few pages that deal with coordination against the jazz ride beat. The book wasn't written for that purpose. It's a basic introduction to the six forms of coordination a drummer must develop: jazz, Latin, rock, double-bass drum, reading two lines at one time and polyrhythms. It's as simple as that. It is not a study in jazz coordination a la Jim Chapin. It's written as an introduction for drummers into the Jim Chapin study.

Keep up the great work you've started with MD. It's a classic and will be very important to all drummers for many years to come.

Sam Ulano
New York, NY

KEITH MOON

I thought it would be interesting to correct some of the points in the Keith Moon article and make some additions. I used to work for Premier. I can tell that T. Bruce Wittet contacted Premier, but I can assure you that my facts are correct.

1) The Who never played in Hamburg before Keith joined.

2) "Tommy's Holiday Camp" was actually written by Pete Townshend.

3) Keith's drums at Monterey were Slingerland, not Ludwig. He played Premier drums for about 95% of his career, never playing anything else after the late '60s. Keith paid for his drums. Premier never gave him anything for free. He always wrote to thank Premier after he took delivery of a new kit.

4) The "Pictures of Lily" kit was built by Premier in '67. The kit was overhauled by Premier just before Keith died and was put on display at a London museum. The kit is now kept by Keith's mother.

5) The photo of Keith on pg. 16 was taken in '68 at Premier's factory in Leicester. These are the drums Keith used at Woodstock up through about '72, when he used the black kit on the opposite page. The three toms on the bass drums were 8 x 14's. The photo was taken in '73 at a rehearsal for the *Quadrophenia* tour.

6) In '74 Keith had a Premier kit with white finish and copper-plated lugs. The three toms on the bass drums then were 10 x 14's. He always used these sizes after this, not 12", 13" and 14" as stated in the article. The snare with these kits was normally a wood-shell Gretsch and sometimes a Ludwig *400.* He changed to a Premier snare in '76.

7) The cymbals in the early '70s were always Paiste although Keith didn't endorse them. In '78 he changed back to Avedis Zildjian.

continued on page 87

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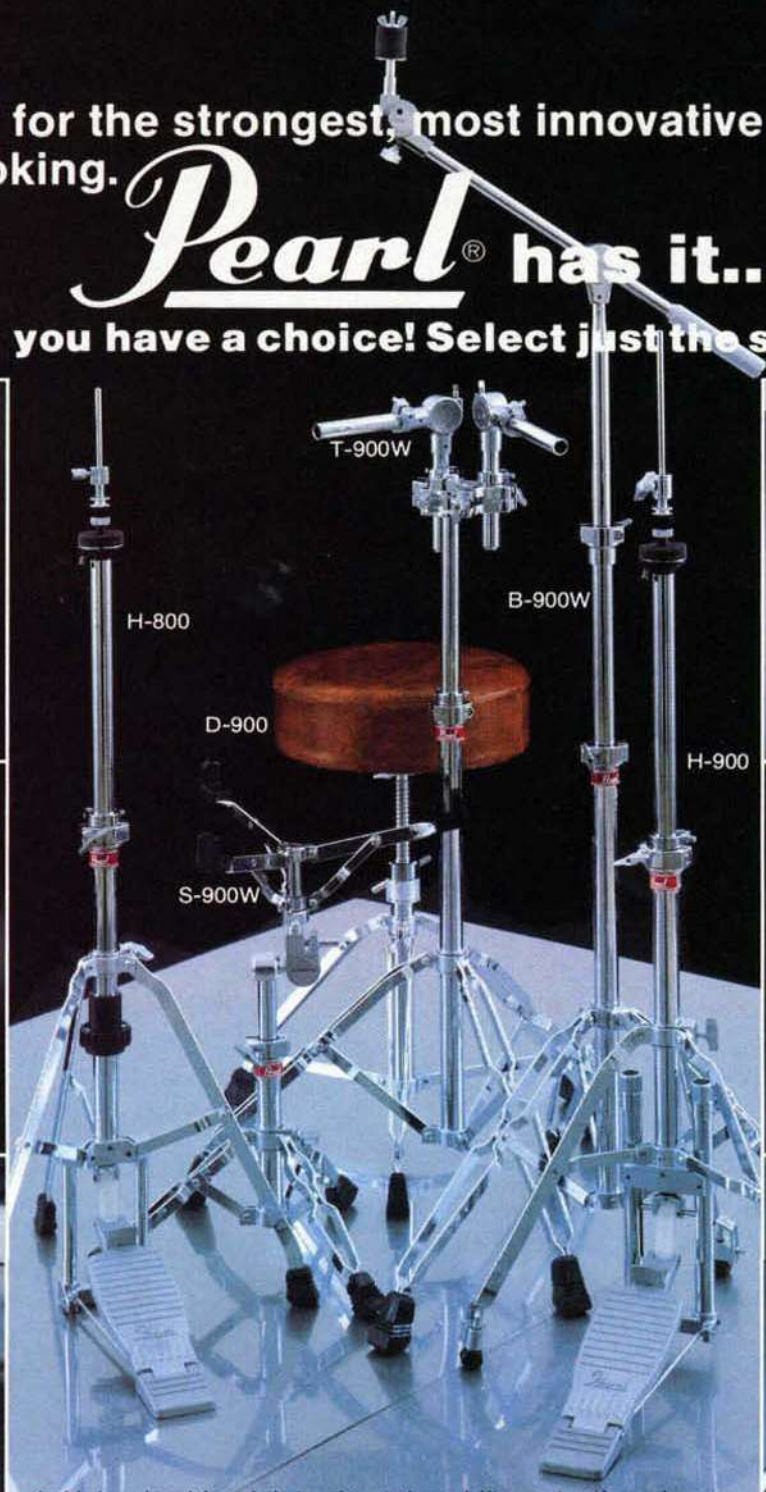

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IT'S QUESTIONABLE

Have a problem? A question? Ask MD. Address all questions to: Modern Drummer, c/o It's Questionable, 1000 Clifton Ave., Clifton, NJ 07013. Questions cannot be answered personally.

Q. I was looking over the details of Neil Peart's Drum Giveaway and noticed that the drums will be Vibrafibed. Could you give me info on exactly what this process involves and it's effect on the sound of the drums?

B.S.
Waynesboro, VA

A. We called The Percussion Center, 1701 N. Harrison St., Fort Wayne, IN 46808—who Vibrafibed Neil's drums—and they explained the process: "Basically, Vibrafibing is done exclusively here, as far as we know. The drum is suspended and spun to centrifuge the fiberglass in. It's a fiberglass mat covered with a gloss coat of fiberglass so that it's about 1/32" to 1/16" thick. The effect is to increase the reflectiveness of the interior of the drum, which dramatically increases the overtones and type of projection that the drum has. It depends on the quality of the drum. It has a greater effect on a drum that has lesser sound to it. If a drum is not very resonant to begin with, it will increase that drum percentage-wise—greater than it will a drum that's already very good-sounding. It has a tendency to equalize drums. In some sets, one drum will sound good and another will not. The uniqueness is that usually a person can play the heads looser after Vibrafibing because the drum is fuller sounding and dynamically more powerful."

Q. I'd like to know if there's a suitable alternative to snare cord for snares. I don't like mylar strips and cord tends to break, stretch, or I can't find a replacement.

R.S.
Reading, PA

A. We've seen some pros use a nylon tape made by Scotch. By doubling a length of tape over onto itself (taping one piece of tape onto another) you have a strap. This can be applied like a mylar strip, but it has more give than mylar. It's apparently the best of mylar and snare-cord combined.

Q. Could you give me any tips/advice on tuning my Slingerland 5 1/2 x 14 chrome-shell snare to achieve a big, fat, pop sound, suitable for rock playing? I'm using a Duraline *Concert* head.

K.B.
Balto, MD

A. We fielded your question to Max Weinberg of the E Street Band, who uses a similar setup: "First, make sure that all the tensioning screws and lugs are clean and easily maneuverable. Make sure they're all the same size. You want to start out with everything on the drum as consistent as possible. Use a Diplomat *snare bottom and an* Ambassador *white-coated batter head for the studio. The Duraline heads respond best when they're not tensioned too tight. They also respond better on a deeper drum, a 6 1/2" snare, if you can get one. If you don't play too hard, try an* Ambassador, *and tune the top head three half-turns after you've seated the head. Seat the bottom head and give it two half-turns on the bottom. Make sure it's equal all around. The top head will be tighter than the bottom. Put a small piece of felt covered by a piece of duct tape in the left-hand side of the drum, furthest away from you. That should do it. You can also tune to the lowest range of the drum rather than the highest. And I'd suggest getting a forty-strand snare."*

Q. In the December '80 MD you had an article entitled *Weightlifting and Drumming.* Can you lift for muscle and not just definition? Lifting for definition will naturally make my muscles grow. Will this affect my drumming by causing me to be "tight"? How many drummers actually do daily weightlifting workouts? Could you furnish me with different repetitions and techniques that will better my drumming?

C.V.
Macon, GA

A. We sent your letter to Jim Dearing, who authored the weightlifting piece. Here is his response:

"As long as you stretch before and after lifting, and lift many repetitions within each of your sets, you shouldn't feel much "tightness," and your drumming agility won't be impaired.

Here's an example. Instead of bench pressing 150 pounds four times, resting, and then repeating the exercise, take off 25 pounds and increase your repetitions to sets of 10. This practice, of lowering the weight to a more comfortable level and lifting it more times, will strengthen your muscles while adding less bulk muscle tissue. This will make it easier for you to play fast without getting tired.

I don't have any data on how many drummers actually workout with weights, but by talking with touring drummers, I've been surprised by their preoccupation with maintaining their health on the road.

There are many weightlifting exercises that can help drummers. A good rule to remember is that if any part of your body is weak, that limits the advancement of your entire health. This means that while your arms might be very strong, you'll still get tired from drumming if you haven't worked on your back, shoulders, hands, feet, legs and buttocks. Your body is closely dependent on each of its parts, so you need a holistic weightlifting program, coupled with stretching and cardiovascular exercises, like jogging, soccer or swimming."

Q. I'm a left-handed drummer who started playing about eleven months ago. I play with my right foot on the bass drum pedal and my left foot on the hi-hat. My problem is that I can't lead with my right hand. Also, I can't read music. I play by ear.

S.N.

A. Being a "lefty," it's only natural that your right hand won't be as strong as your left. Right-handed drummers have the reverse challenge! Since the top half of your body is playing like a "lefty" and the bottom part is playing like a "righty"—that might be strange for you. If it isn't—don't worry about it. Playing by ear is fine. It's a great way to start. Once you've developed the ability to hear, it's not a bad idea to learn how to read music. If you learn how to read, you can pick up any piece of music and play it.

Q. Does Tama have plans to make deep-shell tom-toms in the *Imperial Star* model?

D.B.
Alta Loma, CA

A. Tama has tenative plans to make Imperial Star X-tras—*their deep shell toms—in 1983.*

continued on page 98

"CYMBALS... MY ACCESS TO EXPRESSION."

~Jeff Porcaro

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CYMBALS SOUNDS GONGS

Peter ERSKINE

by Rick Mattingly

If Peter Erskine isn't careful, he's going to start giving jazz, musicians a good name. I mean, we all know about the reputation jazz players have with the general public, right? The stereotypical jazzer is perceived to be a sullen, somber and solitary figure. You can spot jazz musicians immediately: they lend to look melancholy, undernourished, and their eyes have the look of those who are more at home in dimly lit, smoke-filled nightclubs than out in the sunshine and fresh air. So what's with this guy Erskine? How dare he be so healthy; so positive; so happy. If the average person were to encounter a smiling Peter Erskine bopping down the sidewalk in his baseball cap, I doubt if it would occur to that person that Peter is a jazz musician. There's just something too wholesome about him. Doesn't he care about his image?

To hell with image—all that matters is how he plays. And when you hear Peter Erskine play, you are hearing a jazz musician. First coming to prominence with Stan Kenton—whose band Peter joined at the age of eighteen—Erskine quickly established himself as a solid and confident player. After three years with Kenton, Peter enrolled at Indiana University, but within a year, was back on the road, this time with Maynard Ferguson. Following his two-year stint with the Ferguson band, Peter turned up in Weather Report, where he was to remain for the next four years. (Peter now holds the record for longevity by a drummer in Weather Report). During his tenure in that group, Peter began turning up with a variety of small jazz groups, both in clubs and on record. One of these groups was Steps, and when the members of that group decided to make a commitment to each other, Peter left Weather Report and moved to New York. Since that time, Peter has been touring with Steps and working with them to prepare for their first U.S. recording. Meanwhile, he has recorded his own first album as a leader. The record, to be released this month, features Michael and Randy Brecker, Mike Mainieri, Don Alias, Eddie Gomez, Don Crolnick, Bob Mintzer and Kenny Kirkland. The music on the album, and the music he is playing with Steps, is mainstream jazz, and Peter couldn't be happier about that.

RM: I think you surprised a lot of people when you joined Weather Report because you were already somewhat typecast as a big band drummer.

PE: Yeah, I guess so. It's funny, because when I joined Kenton's band, I was not listening to big band music at that time. I was in college and had been listening a lot to things like Miles Davis' *Bitches Brew,* The Mahavishnu Orchestra, who had just come out, and Weather Report, who had come out with their first album about a year before. In fact, I was listening to the second Weather Report album when I got the call from Kenton. So even though I wasn't really thinking of doing that kind of thing at the time, I had grown up listening to big band music, and it excited this thing that was inside me. I think any kind of a gig that a drummer can take that has strong traditions built into it is an invaluable kind of learning experience. And I did have a lot to learn when I joined Kenton's group. So I got into the big band thing, never really thinking of myself so much as the "typical" big band player. I was trying to improve the way I played, and I really admired the great big band drummers and the way they carried the band. But I would always find myself feeling a little envious when I would hear small-group drummers—guys who really played the stuff. I would think, *"That's* the kind of drumming I *really* want to play." Kenton's band, and Maynard's band to a lesser degree, were both kind of heavy. I think my touch was kind of heavy to begin with and so it sort of remained that way. I got fast, but I was still hitting the drums pretty hard. When those bands would play opposite other bands, like when I heard Ed Soph play with Woody Herman's band, I saw how light he was playing and how fleet he was moving. I thought, "That's more the kind of thing I would like to do, and I would like to be thought of as that kind of player."

RM: So did you ever feel, yourself, that you were getting typecast?

PE: No, I wasn't really worrying about it. People tend to try and put a label on most things that they see or hear. It makes it more comfortable for them. They do it with music, with musicians, and with all the popular arts. I don't think the artists think that way themselves. People always have a different conception of themselves than how others perceive them to be. Of course, you have to get some sort of impression across to the public. But the way I considered it—and still do—was that I knew I was young and still learning and I wasn't close to the point where I was going to get.

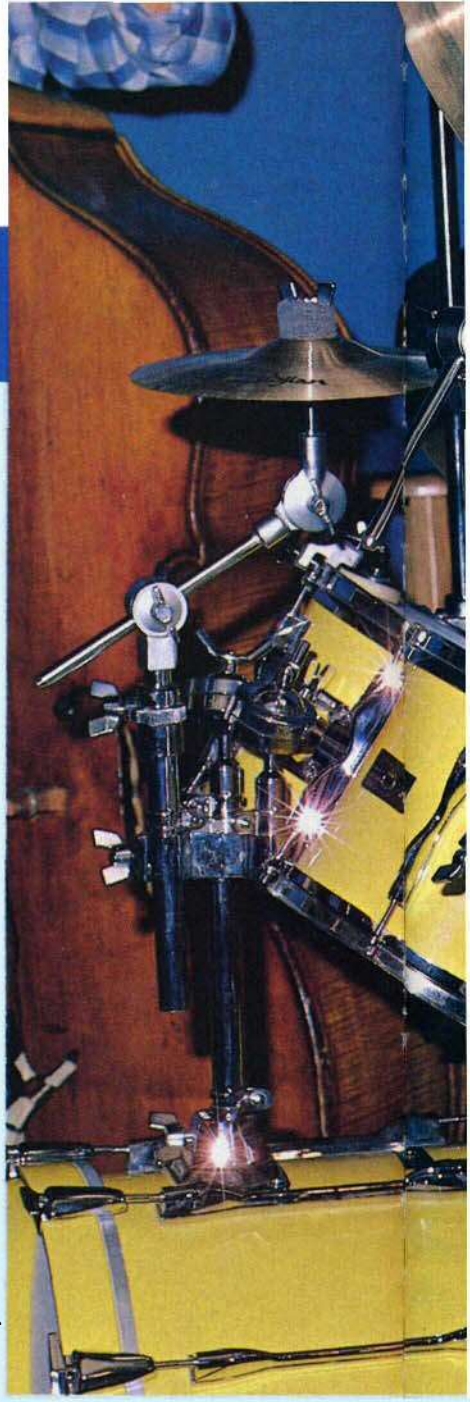
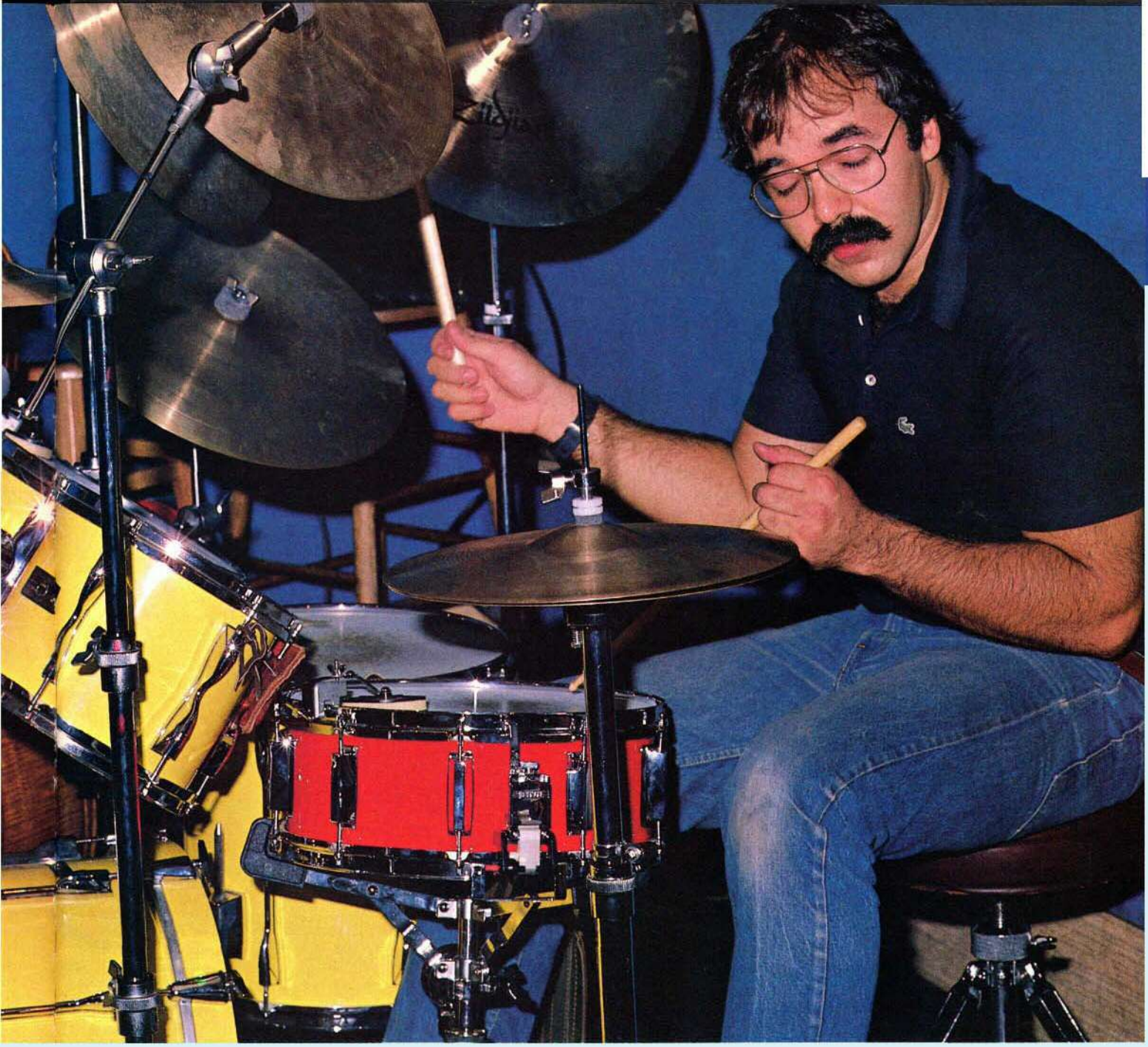


Photo by Laura Friedman

When I joined Weather Report, the first concerts were in Japan, and when we got there, they had a big press conference. The Japanese are incredibly avid followers of jazz, and they really knew the history of Weather Report. So one of the central points of this press conference was the new drummer. A guy stood up and asked me, "What makes you think, having played with Stan Kenton and Maynard Ferguson, that you're Qualified to play with Weather



Report?" I was thinking, "Geeze, gimme a break. I haven't even played the first gig yet." And so I got into this meandering thing about, "Well, good music is good music, and requires the same type thing ..." Joe Zawinul interrupted me and said to the guy, "What are you talking about? Weather Report *is* like a big band. The sound is big and we play like a bunch of guys and it's a small group too ..."

The basic prerequisites are the same. The most outstanding feature, I think, of Weather Report is the conceptual framework of the group. It's a really incredible combination of extremely modern music, very tonal music, and rhythmic music. To me, it was a natural next step, and apparently, from what they'd heard of me, they felt it would be a natural next step too. Kenton had a lot of tradition. Maynard's thing was not so traditionally bound. People would hate the band a lot of times because Maynard would be playing all these rock things. I always thought the best thin g we did with Maynard's band were the older bebop charts; that's when the band really shined.

RM: A lot of people just knew the band from "Rocky."

PE: I think any time a jazz band gets a hit like that, no one should begrudge that particular artist the success. People like Maynard, Chuck Mangione and Bob James lured a lot of people into the jazz department in record stores, who normally wouldn't have browsed around there too much. And I know first hand that a lot of people got turned on to Weather Report, Miles Davis, Charlie Parker and other things because they heard a Chuck Mangione record. They would go to a record store and ask, "What else do you have that's jazz?" They thought that was jazz. So anyway, that was an exciting thing for Maynard, but I think it steered him in a bit of a funny direction. He started going after more and more movie-theme hits. It's good to have an objective with what you want to do with your music, but you can't try to play music with the sole purpose of having a hit. It seems that kind of thinking is doomed, sooner or later. I think the most important thing is to make the best music you can. If it's really good, it will

Photo by Joost Lejjen

"THE CAPABILITIES OF [DRUM] COMPUTERS HOLD A LOT OF PROMISE, BUT I'D STILL RATHER HEAR ELVIN HIT A DRUM THAN HEAR ANYBODY PUSH A BUTTON."

find its way to people. Doing themes to all sorts of TV shows and stuff is really underestimating the listeners' intelligence. The artist's real audience deserves more than that. You want to play for a lot of people, but you do have a faithful audience of listeners. You can't expect them to continue to more or less support you if you cast aside your musical integrity. That's the dilemma of trying to be commercial.

Weather Report never tried to be commercial. It's amazingly unique that Weather Report is as popular as it is, and yet doesn't try to be anything other than what it is. They don't worry about fulfilling expectations of other people. It creates its own music and continues to have lasting value because the band doesn't try to achieve anything other than its own creative evolution. Weather Report is my favorite band. It always has been; it always will be. I was very fortunate; it was one of those "right place at the right time" kind of things. It opened an incredible number of doors for me, too, to be able to play with other jazz musicians. When I was living in Los Angeles and when I played outside the context of Weather Report, I gradually built a reputation for being a small-group player. I really enjoyed working with people like George Cables, Freddie Hubbard, Joe Farrell, Bobby Hutcherson and Joe Henderson.

RM: One of the first things you did outside of Weather Report was the Joni Mitchell album, *Mingus.*

PE: We did that real quick—two afternoon sessions; first takes. It's a good record, although when I listen to that album now I find the mood a little depressing.

RM: Except for "Dry Cleaner From Des Moines."

PE: Yeah, "Dry Cleaner" is kind of a bright little number. Originally she tried recording it as a bebop tune. Then I was messing around with that little brush beat and the producer came rushing in and said, "Yeah! Keep doing that." Then Jaco walked in, made up the bass thing, and we cut the basic track. Then Joni came in and sang on top of it. That was like an impromptu thing; it was fun. I was really knocked out to to be playing on a Joni Mitchell album. From a jazz standpoint, I don't know if it captured the Mingus musical mood, but that wasn't the point. It was Joni's approach to that music and her collaboration with Mingus, and, you know . . .

RM: That's what came out of it.

PE: Yeah. I think it should be listened to a little more in that context. A lot of people got real uptight and said, "Jaco was totally the wrong bass player for that." That wasn't the point. It wasn't trying to be a Mingus Dynasty with vocals.

RM: I saw a review that said, "It sounds sort of like Weather Report with a girl singer."

PE: Awww . . . reviews! You know, there are some really knowledgeable writers out there about jazz; the ones who have constructive criticisms about the music. You really appreciate that. I don't like to get defensive about reviews. We've all had our share of ghastly reviews. People, for some reason, may really not like you. Basically, if a writer has a good musical comment, I can read it and say, "Yeah, he's right." Like one writer was writing about Weather Report and said that I had a tendency to overplay, and I should watch that. And I thought, "Yeah, he's got a point." But another guy once said, "As for the drummer, I can think of 500 other drummers I'd rather listen to before I listen to Peter Erskine." What a thing to say! I mean, I can't even *think* of 500 drummers. Hyperbole is sometimes useful, but that's like doubting the intelligence of everyone. We're not total fools. When we're playing, some things don't work and some things don't sound so good, but if the writer respects music and musicians at all, he's got to give a little credit to those musicians. I'm not saying that they should blandly say, "Everything is great." But at the same time, jazz musicians aren't trying to put scams over on people, and I don't appreciate it when a reviewer tries to take away from the obvious craft that's in something. I always thought a lot of jazz writers got into this "Broadway reviewer" mentality of "Let's close the show down" kind of thing. That doesn't help anybody. Some people try to build names for themselves by writing strongly worded diatribes against certain players. That's pretty worthless musical criticism. If jazz writers really love the music, they should support it. Keep artistic integrity in there and keep the standards high, but be objective and realize that there are a lot of tastes. There are a lot of musicians and a lot of people listening, and we've all got to support it if we love it. I once heard jazz critic and writer Ira Gitler speak, and he said that all

the jazz musicians he had ever known have been banner carriers for the music, in the way they thought they could best do it. One of the remarkable things about jazz is the love in the music. I think listeners can hear that love, and feel the commitment. I think that's what makes it special. So if we love it the way we say we do, the main thing is to keep it alive somehow.

RM: That brings us to the records you've done on Contemporary Records—a label that's certainly doing its part to keep jazz alive. You did albums with Joe Farrell, Joe Henderson, George Cables . . .

PE: George Cables is an amazing musician. We have a real natural affinity. I worked with him in a club in L.A. one night, just kind of by accident, and after that we started playing together. I really like his tunes and I love playing with him. That basic rhythm section—George, Tony Dumas and I—also did the Joe Farrell album, and went to Japan with Freddie Hubbard.

The Joe Henderson album was interesting. I played with Chick Corea on some of the cuts. It's a good record, but I wish I'd played better. I was amazingly uptight that day. My car engine blew up on the San Diego Freeway on the way to do the session. So somebody had to come and pick me up on the side of the freeway and take me to the studio. But it was good. I hope I get to play with Joe and Chick again.

John Koenig is putting out excellent records on the Contemporary label. The sound is a good, intimate jazz sound, and the music is happening. All the stuff is done in a matter of two or three days. That's the way I like jazz records. The last Weather Report album—the mixing took two or three months, but the basic tracks were done in two afternoons. I like the immediacy; that's what jazz is all about. I like the multi-track technology, and I love what the studios can do, but there's something about recording direct to two-track—you can't beat it! Just that spirit of, "Let's go for it and do it!" If you get good players, you can do it. So I like the spirit of the records that Contemporary is putting out. A good jazz label.

RM: Did you do any studio work while you were in California?

PE: I did a few movies and a couple of TV shows. I wasn't tearing up the studio scene by any means. It's a different art doing studio playing and getting a good recorded sound. There are some musicians who are really amazing at it, and I really respect that. But I decided at some point that I didn't want to be a "record-date drummer." I don't want to be on just anybody's record. I figure when you make a record, it's going to be around for a long time, so you want it to stand for something. I like to have a certain intent on a record; I like it to at least be going for something that I like or appreciate, or to be with musicians who I like to play with. So I don't do a bunch of record dates.

As far as anonymous studio work is concerned, I welcome it to a point. But that stuff drives you crazy after a while. I like movie dates; they're really challenging. You get a 60-piece orchestra in there, you've got the clock, the pressure's really on, you can't make mistakes—I like that. Some people just take it in stride, but you could tell that I was more or less new at it because I would go into the booth and listen to the playbacks. I was trying to learn how to get a better sound in those situations. I like going to the movies, so playing on soundtracks was a kick. I've played on a lot of soundtracks for the kind of movies

"YOU CAN HEAR FROM THE MUSIC WHAT KIND OF A PERSON THAT DRUMMER IS. THE AMOUNT OF SPACE, THE SENSITIVITY WHICH INVOLVES SHADING AND TOUCH, THE WAY THE MUSIC IS PROPELLED, HOW HARD IT SWINGS OR HOW GUTSY IT IS-THAT'S ALL REFLECTIVE OF A DRUMMER'S PERSONALITY."

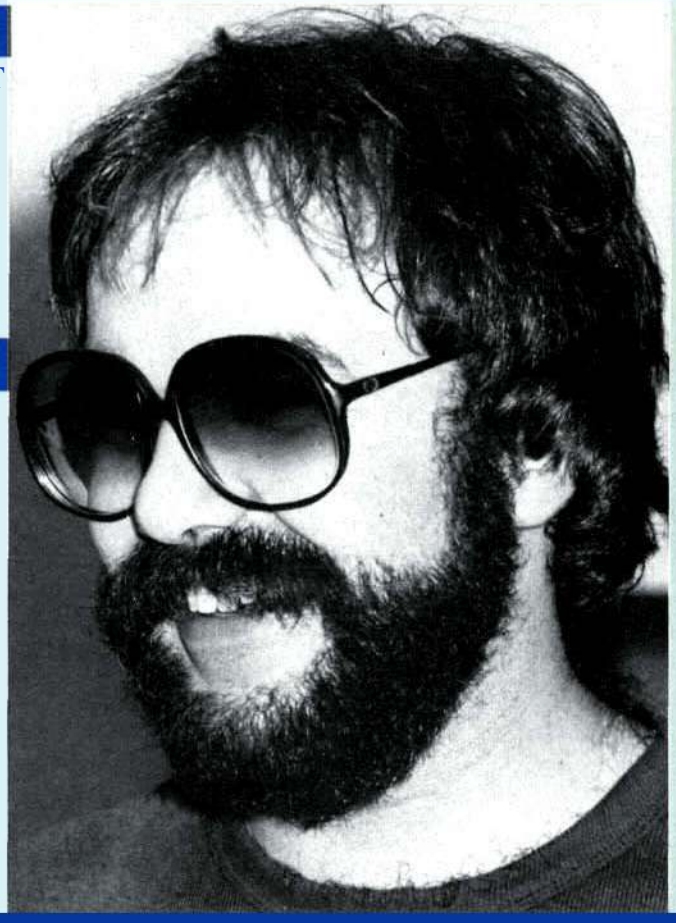


Photo by K. Abe

Photo by Mark Harris

WEATHER REPORT

they wind up showing at drive-ins as the second feature.

RM: Would you like to tell me the names of any of those, so our readers . . .

PE: [laughing] No, please! I dragged my girl friend to a couple, just to sit there and listen to the drums mixed way back behind some tire squeals or something. "Listen! That's *me*\" She got pretty tired of that.

After a while, if you do too much of that sort of thing, it starts affecting your life. I like to do some studio work, but what I've done is very little compared to the people who do it for a living. I like to do just enough for the challenge, and the sport of it. It's a kick. But I want to be a jazz musician. That's what I really want to do, and I'm fortunate enough right now that I'm *really* happy with the music I'm playing. I want it to get better and I know it's going to get better, but I go to bed at night thinking, "I'm playing the music I want to play." I think everyone should be able to do the recording thing, and be well-versed enough to play that kind of stuff. Being a professional musician demands that—especially now, for drummers. You can't just say, "I want to be a jazz drummer" right off and expect to work. You've got to do casuals, you've got to play dances, you've got to play record dates, you get calls for jingles, you get called to be funky—you've got to do it. It's not exactly paying your dues, but it's a way of being heard by more and more people. Drummers today have to be more eclectic than they used to be. Right now, I'm trying to synthesize all the musical things I love and forge them into some kind of style. If Steps makes it, God willing, then I'll have the setting in which I can do that. That's all you can ask for, really.

RM: A moment ago, you mentioned that you love studio technology, but that you also like recording direct, with the whole band. What is it you like about each situation?

PE: It takes real skill to be able to put drums on top of a track that's already there, or play drums to a click track. You have to make the music happen to this existing track, or this metronome. It takes a fair amount of experience, and you've got to keep your ears wide open to be able to fit yourself into it. With the creative process, you can take amazing advantage of the overdub situation. With Weather Report, we would sometimes put a lot of different drum tracks on top of each other. Sonically, it created a whole different sound perspective. We weren't doing it because it was the only way we could get those rhythms. It was just different. When you record things separately, you can bring certain things out. I'm going to try doing some things live with the Oberheim drum machine. It will essentially be me playing along with myself, because I will have programmed the machine. I like playing off of things that are already there. The overdub thing can be creative, and can be good. However, you can kill the spirit of live music if you're not careful. You start hearing all the things you want to perfect, and you get caught up in just that thing of overdubbing, and you can end up with just a polished nothing. I like the live to two-track thing more, but still, the potential in multitrack is great. I think what's happening now with synthesizers and computers and all this stuff is wild. Nothing's ever going to replace acoustic instruments, but this other stuff is neat too. I dig it. I dig the whole thing.

RM: Do you ever feel that the emphasis right now is on technology rather than music?

PE: Perhaps. It could just be growing pains. For a while, the emphasis is going to be on the technical part of something. It's like certain movies which have amazing technical effects, but don't have a story that moves people. With records, the producer and the artist have to say, "Well, this *sounds* amazing, but what's most important here?" I've seen a lot of records sort of floundering on the coast line between creativity and technology. Creativity takes a good, strong overview, and takes some discipline. So you've got to be able to use these tools creatively. There's nothing wrong with the tools, whether they be a hammer and nails or a 24-track recording machine and a synthesizer. It's up to *us* to use the stuff intelligently.

RM: From what you hear, do you think enough people *are* using the stuff intelligently?

PE: I don't know if there are enough. I don't know how intelligent people are either—look how many people are shooting each other. I listen less and less to records now. When I joined Weather Report, I had a bunch of tapes, and Jaco told me, "In a couple of years, you're not going to be listening to any of that shit." He was sort of saying that the music we were going to be playing was going to be so heavy that I wouldn't want to listen to anything else. Now, I haven't taken that to heart, because when I was young, I was told, "Listen to every kind of music." And you have to. You have to keep your ears wide open. But you can't listen to just anything, because a lot of the records coming out are like certain types of food—you get no nourishment from them, and they can actually be bad for you. So in that way, yeah, a lot of people aren't using the stuff creatively. But like I said, all of this technology can be taken advantage of and used. It comes from a knowledge of music. If you don't know what you're doing, it will come out sounding like a big piece of nothing. A lot of music sounds good, but there is no substance. It's just like cotton candy.

RM: You mentioned using an Oberheim drum machine, and I notice you've got one here in your apartment.

PE: I had my first experience with one of the so-called drum computers using Roger Linn's machine. I programmed it to play the form of Wayne Shorter's tune, "When It Was Now," on the Weather Report album. I was programming while they were practicing their parts, so when I was finished, they were ready to do a take. The tape started rolling, I pushed a button, the guys played along with the machine, and I

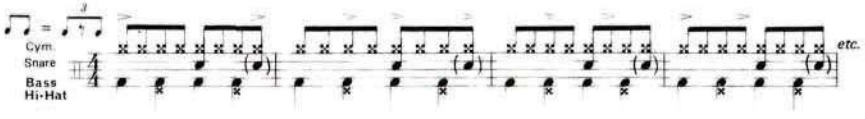
continued on page 43

"I DECIDED AT SOME POINT THAT I DIDN'T WANT TO BE A 'RECORD-DATE DRUMMER.' I DON'T WANT TO BE ON JUST ANYBODY'S RECORD. I FIGURE WHEN YOU MAKE A RECORD, ITS GOING TO BE AROUND FOR A LONG TIME, SO YOU WANT IT TO STAND FOR SOMETHING."

Photo by Laura Friedman

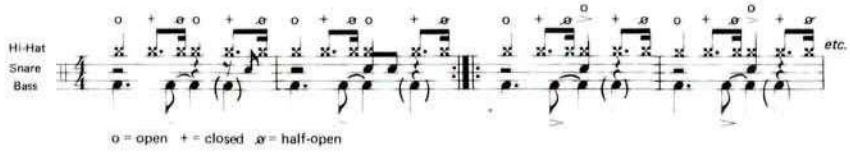
Notes On Peter's Style

This first example is the type of thing I used to play on certain Weather Report tunes, such as "Night Passage." This was typical of many of Zawinul's compositions, where he would want one rhythm that was moving ahead (the cymbal part), with a half-time thing underneath (the snare drum part).



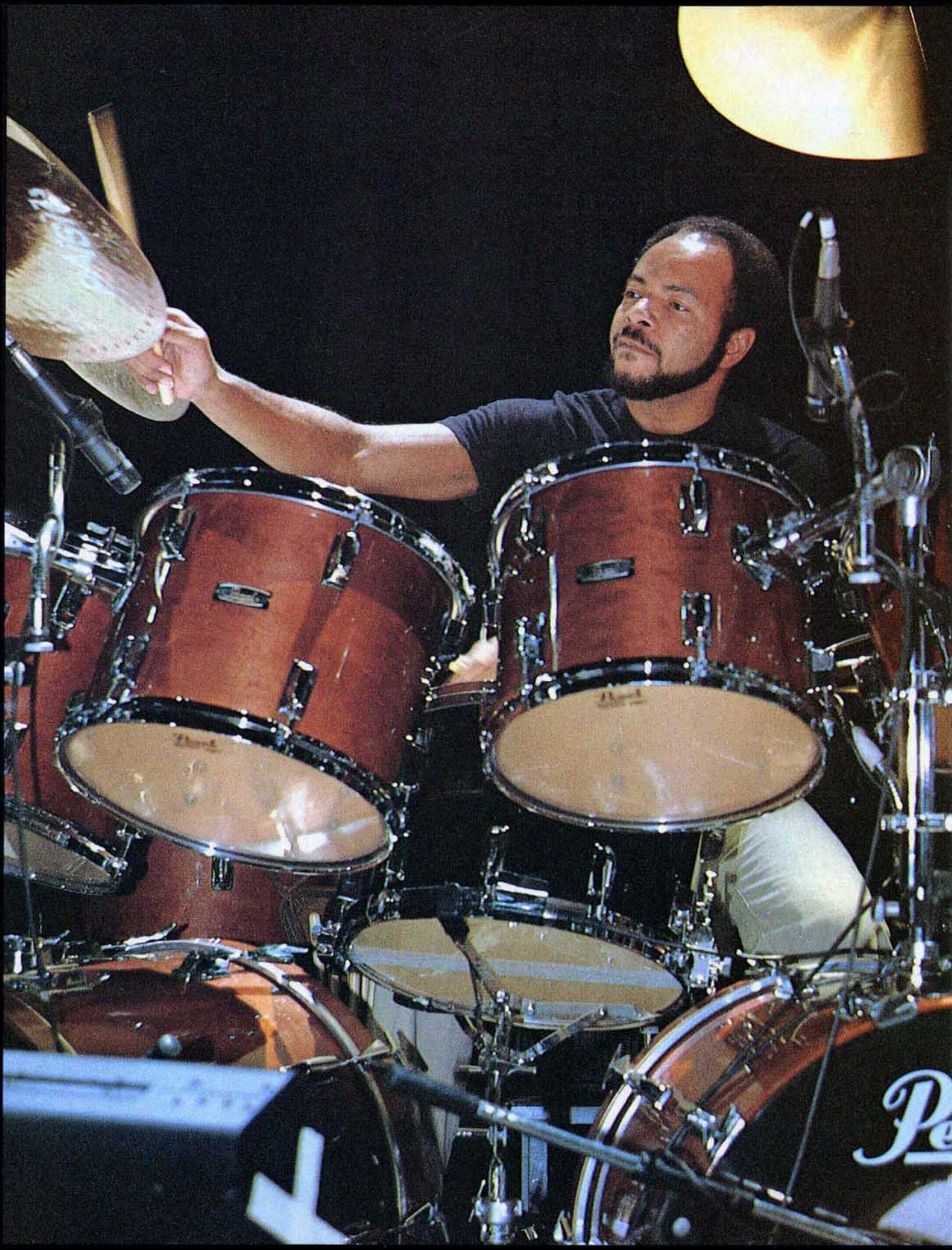
This second example is the basis of the solo piece "In Statu Nascendi," on my album. The feeling on this is in-between straight eighths and swung eighths. With jazz interpretation, the last 16th of the hi-hat is played at the same time as the eighth note on the snare at the end of the first bar. This is sort of a jazzed-up baiao, which is a Brazilian beat.

Although this sounds fast, I'm not thinking a fast "1-2-3-4-1-2-3-4," but rather, taking it two bars at a time, each downbeat becomes a "l-(breath)-2" kind of thing. By approaching it in this manner, you can play a fast tempo without it sounding frantic.



These examples are just to give the essence of what I'm doing. One thing I do, which is difficult to notate, is play a lot of little "ghost" notes on the snare drum. These are fill-in notes that are not always strongly articulated. Sometimes you almost don't hear them, but they're there, and it's typical in a lot of jazz drumming. However, these do not simply fall into a "no-man's land" of the time. They are still played with rhythmic precision.

CHESTER THOMPSON



by Stanley Hall

Up For The Challenge

You've seen the ad: an enormous double-bass outfit with eight deep-shell tom-toms, and behind the mighty set, the affable, but powerful, Chester Thompson. The picture is captioned with the quote, "If you're gonna rock with a band like Genesis, you've got to roll on drums like Pearls."

Drummer Chester Thompson does just that, but he also does a lot more. He writes music for his own band, plays with saxophonist John Klemmer, shares a floating drum seat with Alex Acuna in an obscure third world band in L.A., does Broadway musical road shows and has recorded and toured with Weather Report and Frank Zappa. And, oh yes, he drums for Genesis on the road.

The key to Chester's approach to music is versatility, and the best way for someone to acquire Chester's percussive services is to offer him the opportunity to do something different. Chester likes to keep busy, and he likes to occupy himself with the challenge of the new, the different. He is probably most widely known as the road drummer for Genesis and he was prepping for another evening of art-rock extravaganza when I talked with him.

SH: When did you start your professional career?

CT: I've been working every week damn near since I was thirteen. I did an occasional dance when I was twelve.

SH: Did you take any lessons, did you study at all or did you just figure it out yourself?

CT: It's hard to say actually. I guess I was about eleven when I started. There was a guy named James Harrison who was living in Newark. He was *a jazz* drummer around town so I started studying with him. He was teaching me the basics of playing jazz. I was playing along with records and stuff, and he explained what to listen for and how to approach it all. After that it was school bands and stuff.

SH: So you took band in school?

CT: Oh yes, I always played in whatever school band there was, but I have been actively gigging since I was thirteen.

SH: Did you learn to read in school?

CT: I was actually reading before I started playing drums. They had little plastic flutes in elementary school so I did that. They wrote numbers on the board to show you which finger to put down. I wasn't really satisfied with that, so I had the teacher just explain the basis of reading notes. Then when I got into junior high school, that's when lessons actually started as to actively reading. There was one point in high school where I had a private teacher for one semester. A guy was sort of passing through town, named Tony Aimes. He was with the Washington National Symphony and he was teaching at Peabody, so I took one semester of private lessons down there.

SH: Do you play anything else besides drums? There was a note on one of the Genesis tour programs that listed you as playing drums and flute.

CT: Yeah, I came off the road in '71. I had been on the road with local groups based out of Baltimore working clubs mostly in the South. I was out for a while in 1970 with an organist, Jack McDuff, who was my first major-name jazz gig. I got sort of tired of that and, in '71, I came off the road and came back here to go to college. I went up to Community College of Baltimore and I had a really good time because all of the faculty was from Peabody. They moved so they could run the department the way they wanted. So I went there for two years.

It was pretty limited at that time however, because I was taking a full load. The summer I got out of there is when I went to California, but I started taking flute while I was in college because you have to take a different instrument class. I sort of fell in love with the flute, so I started taking it.

SH: The first major group you were with was Frank Zappa's. How did you hook up with him?

CT: I'm from Baltimore. Zappa's road manager at the time, Marty Corellis, is from Baltimore. So is Frank for that matter. The situation was that he had Ralph Humphrey at that time who was a technical wizard, but he wanted a little more feeling I guess, and a little more funk, and so I auditioned and stayed.

SH: When you went out to California to do the audition with *Zappa,* how did that work? Did he throw charts in front of you?

CT: Oh man, it was weird. Mainly what he had in mind was, like I say, for the feeling thing. However, when I met him and went out to his house, he gave me a chart to look at that night to see if I could play it the next day. I had never seen a mess like that in my life! It definitely was the hardest piece of music I had ever looked at, including any orchestral music I had ever played. Quite pointedly, no, I could not play it in a night. It was a piece called "Kung Fu." We recorded it but the tapes got lost at the studio he was working at so that sort of ended that, but it was difficult. I mean, I could read fairly well when I got there because I had actually spent some time up in Towson with Hank Levy, so I was sort of familiar with time signatures. But hell, compared with what *Zappa* was doing, that was nothing. He really likes to turn it around. While I was with *Zappa* I probably learned more about reading and interpreting than at any time I had spent doing anything else, including college.

SH: Did he throw a lot of drum charts on you?

CT: Yeah. Most of the stuff the first year-and-a-half with the band was charts. He'd even write out the fills in some cases, even as far as which drum he wanted them on. It was an amazing challenge. But further down the line the band was actually tight enough that he could come in and say, "I want this," and we could do it.

SH: You played with him long enough to learn how to interpret his ideas.

CT: Yeah, everybody sort of knew his way of doing things. At that point he sort of backed off writing charts, which said a lot about the band really.

SH: How long were you with that band?

CT: Pretty much two years.

SH: And how long did the double drum happen with you and Ralph Humphrey?

CT: That happened about the first year, I think. Just about a year.

SH: And after that it was just you?

CT: Yeah. Well, Ruth Underwood was in the band most of the time, and she was playing straight percussion.

SH: Did you enjoy working with a percussionist?

CT: Oh yeah. I don't work with a lot of percussionists. There aren't a lot of them I'm crazy about working with actually, conga drummers especially. I don't know, the way I play, depending upon what kind of music it is, I tend to think along those lines anyway. So what happens with conga players is we end up in each other's way a lot of the time, as I'm already doing the things they do. Brazilian percussionists probably fit better with what I do because it is like lighter stuff and they tend to play sound effects as opposed to drums.

SH: Triangles and little cuicas?

CT: Yeah. Drum sounds tend to get in my way because I tend to get a little busy anyway.

SH: You started using double bass drums with *Zappa.* Do you prefer playing double bass to playing single bass?

CT: Depends upon what it is. I like it when I want it. I don't use it all the time, but when I want it there it's good to have it. It's like,

Photo by Lissa Wales

Photo by Lissa Wales

you don't play all the notes on the piano all the time, but when you want them there, you want them there. However, with a lot of things I end up doing in between tours, there's not always room for that. If you are in a studio, you may or may not have a rehearsal. In a lot of cases you walk in and sight read it; run it down once or twice and then record it.

When there is room for interpretation or the music is really free enough that I can play it a little bit, then yeah, I definitely prefer the two bass drums. When it is that sort of straight ahead, to the point, business situation, I am still more comfortable with one bass drum actually. When I was with Weather Report I played two bass drums because there was space for it. With Genesis, I am playing mostly parts, so there's not always room for it.

SH: You played with Zappa for two years. Did you then go straight to Weather Report?

CT: It was weird. Alphonzo Johnson is a real good friend of mine, has been for a long time, and he was with them at the time.

SH: How did you meet him?

CT: Here in Baltimore. He's from Philly but we were both with an organization called Premier Attractions which was into managing local groups. It was mostly into promoting concerts around the country. But they had a couple of other projects going. One was a group of girls from Washington called the Feminine Society—a really good girls' singing group. There was another singer named Renaud. His band was called Renaud and the Junction.

I was playing with the girls and Al was playing with Renaud and we were sort of always together. We played a really long time in Boston where we got to be really good friends, and we played together every chance that we got. We always tried to get each other on gigs when we could. He had sort of been needling me, "Come on and join Weather Report," because they had really been having drummer problems for a couple of years.

SH: Who did they have before you, Ndugu?

CT: No, he recorded with them, but he was never in the band. He did the *Tale Spinnin'* album, but he never played any gigs with them at all. This all happened about the same time; they were rehearsing for *Tale Spinnin'* and they were trying drummers left and right. They were just flying people in from everywhere. It wasn't working out and Al was telling them at that point to check me out, but schedules sort of conflicted and they had a deadline at the studio so they went with Ndugu. They were pretty much finished with the album by the time I came along, but I actually began playing with them. I went to rehearsal one night because Zappa had cancelled a couple of tours. He had some stuff he wanted to work on himself. It was a matter of me not wanting to be out of work because I had no connections in Los Angeles whatsoever. I went down one night to rehearsal to just sit in with them, and it was like magic from the first night—there was no backing out at that point.

SH: When you played with them, were they working on material from *Tale Spinnin'* or were they working on *Black Market* stuff?

CT: No, it was one of those bands where material tends to get written just before recording it, even though they may have been working on it awhile. With Zappa, he doesn't record anything until he has taken it on the road, gone over it and changed it. Then he records it. Most bands, including Genesis and Weather Report as well, just before going to the studio, they finish the music, go in and record it, and then play it on tour. That's what happened when I came in. They were going over the *Tale Spinnin'* stuff and *Black Market* charts.

SH: Did Joe Zawinul give you charts for that?

CT: Oh yeah, they've got charts for everything.

SH: Drum charts?

CT: Not so much drum charts as lead charts. Their stuff is so different and there is so much room for interpretation. There is always a structure to the song, but you'd have to have a different way of looking at things to even recognize it.

SH: But you did have charts of some sort?

CT: Oh yeah, there were charts and we sort of had a couple of rehearsals before going to the studio, and that was it.

"WHEN YOU READ A PART ALL THE TIME, YOU DON'T REALLY LEARN IT-YOU TEND TO BECOME A BIT LAZY AND YOU TEND TO RELY ON THE MUSIC."

SH: I know Alex Acuna played percussion on that one. Did you record separately?
CT: No, we were in the band together. He was the percussionist in the band and we had been on tour together and we did it all at the same time.
SH: Did you tour with him before you did the album?
CT: Yes. We didn't do the *Black Market* material but we were used to playing together.
SH: How do you like working with Alex?
CT: Hell, he's a dream. He's just so tasty; he never plays the wrong thing, whether he is playing drums or percussion.
SH: He really seems to have that third world swing; he can go in any direction.
CT: Oh, yeah. Like his drum playing lately has become phenomenal.
SH: What kind of percussion did he play? Did he do a lot of congas or did he do mostly timbales?
CT: No, he did a little of it all, and he knew when to do what. Whatever was needed at the moment he could do. Some guys have a few licks that they know and they hold onto those for dear life, but he was always ready to go for anything. Weather Report was magic; it got a little weird at the end, but that was just one of those things.
SH: How long did you play with that group?
CT: For a year. We must have done about five or six tours in that time.
SH: Why did you jump out of that situation?
CT: Alphonzo had quit and I was in Baltimore for Christmas. When I came back, Al and I had been so close that they had naturally assumed that we were forming a band together. They had already started calling in drummers, which got to be a very embarrassing situation. That's how Michael Walden ended up playing a couple of tracks on the album. I was in the studio and in walks Michael Walden, and it's like, "What are you doing here?" "I'm with the band. What are you doing here?" It was a very embarrassing situation.
SH: Just a misunderstanding?
CT: Yes, but it was one of those kind of things where they were unable to clear it up, and once the vibes get funny with a group like that, there's just no way.
SH: It seems like Joe likes to control the situation; the band goes the way Joe feels.
CT: In a lot of cases. But now that I am away from the situation, Joe and I are still fairly good friends. Joe is one of those people who is very clear about what he is doing. No one else may be very clear about what he is doing, but Joe is, and he will do what needs to be done in a very direct, straightforward kind of way. But because other people don't always know what he has in mind, it comes off sort of funny sometimes. I mean, he is so straight ahead that it's sort of a blessing or a curse, depending which side of the fence you are looking at it from. There are a lot of stories about his bullheadedness and all, but now that I know him better, I think it is just his European directness—he doesn't feel it is necessary to apologize for his actions, which is okay. When other people are involved though, they tend to take him differently.
SH: After you worked with Weather Report, what happened then? Did you go to Genesis or was there something in between?
CT: There was a lot in between. I didn't do a lot of work that year. In fact, I sort of went into a panic.
SH: What year are we talking about?
CT: Beginning of '76. It was real panic time—you go crazy for a minute. Especially when you are with a major group and all of a sudden you don't even have a gig. It's like, "Well, maybe it's all a dream anyhow." I was in L.A. and I had just bought a new car,

continued on page 64

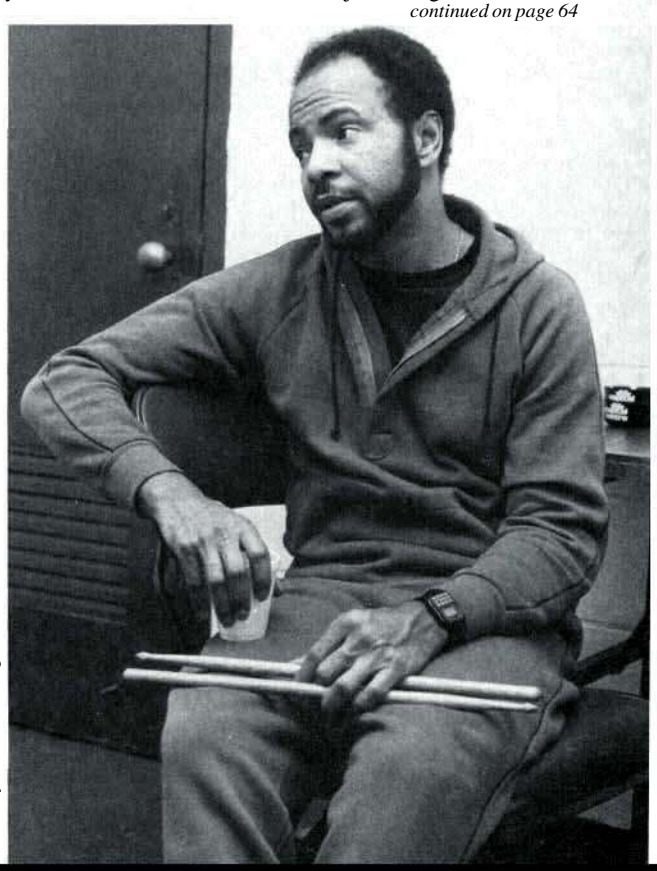


Photo by John W. Wright

MD Forum:

Audio Engineers

On Miking & Recording Drums:

Part 2

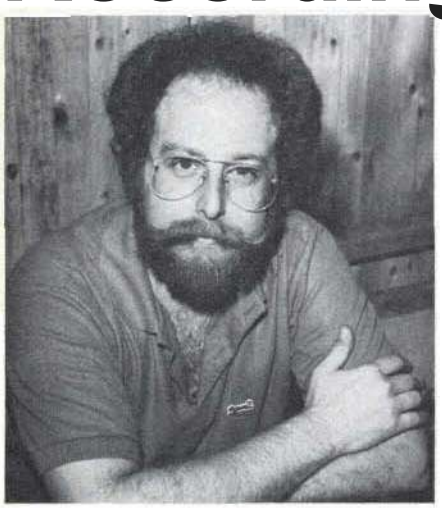


Photo by Rick Malkin

by Mark Z. Stevens

Mark Hogue

Michael Delugg

Armin Steiner

Sennheiser MD 421

Shure SM57

Electro-Voice CS15P

Mark Stevens is one of the busiest studio musicians and one of the most knowledgeable in the area of miking and recording drums. Part 1 of this article appeared in the December 82 MD. In this issue, we have the completion of a series of interviews with several of the most qualified recording engineers in the business. What began as a simple task of finding out what microphones were used in recording drums, Mark expanded into a full-blown discussion of why specific mic's are used and when. He also covers the tender topic of engineer/drummer relationships in the studio. In Part I we heard from engineers Murray McFadden, Danny Wallin, Larry Forkner, and Stan Miller. In Part 2 we conclude with Mark Hogue, Michael DeLugg, and Armin Steiner.

Mark Hogue

MS: Can you tell me, in elementary terms, what a microphone is and what it does?

MH: A microphone is a device that, ideally, should pick up and reproduce as accurately as possible, the wave forms created by various sound sources: drums, instruments, vocals. Accuracy and tonal quality become subjective points of the ability of a microphone to function. The analogy of a speaker being a microphone in reverse or a microphone being a speaker in reverse is a perfect way to describe that.

MS: Can we talk about the different kinds of mic's?

MH: A dynamic mic' is a speaker in reverse. It really is. It has a diaphragm that would correspond to a cone. It has a voice coil, and it's the velocity of the sound moving the diaphragm within a magnetic field that creates an electrical impulse. That's how a dynamic mic' works. A condenser mic' does basically the same thing, but instead of using a diaphragm, it uses a capacitor; a charged field that senses the wave forms as they cross the field.

MS: That needs some kind of power.

MH: Right. A ribbon mic' is basically a diaphragm mic', like a dynamic mic'. In-

stead of having a round, speaker-like diaphragm with a voice coil, it has a ribbon. The coil is laid into the ribbon and the entire ribbon is moving within a magnetic field. Ribbon mic's generally have a very warm sound. A dynamic mic' will be very clear sounding, but it will have a proximity effect. In other words, the closer you get to that microphone, the greater the bass response. That's in varying degrees, depending on the microphone. But almost all dynamic mic's have some kind of proximity effect. A lot of condenser mic's do, but they don't necessarily have to because of the nature of the microphone. Most ribbon mic's have some amount of proximity effect. So, if you get a drumkit that's real flat sounding and you use a dynamic microphone—the closer you get it to the drum, the more bottom there's going to be. The farther away you get it from the drum, the flatter or smoother it will be. So, if you want a tubby sounding snare drum, take a Shure *SM-57* and put it real close to the head and you'll get that real strong bottom end. If you want it clearer sounding, back it off the head a little.

MS: If you're working with a drummer who you know, what mic's do you like to use and where do you like to use them?

MH: Different drummers, different kits and different types of music all require different situations. Especially tuning the kit and the way the drummer plays. Two drummers can sit down behind an identical drumkit, tuned the same way, and it won't sound the same. The style of playing has a lot to do with it. The basic rock 'n' roll setup that I like is an AKG *D-12,* large diaphragm mic' for the bass drum. The definitive snare drum mic' is the Shure *SM-57.* For tom-toms I like to use Sennheiser *421s.* For hi-hats and overhead miking, any number of flat condenser mic's: AKG's with *CE-l* capsules, Sennheiser *451s* work real well for overhead applications in live situations.

MS: What about Neumann U-87s?

U-87s are great, but for me, I'm a road engineer; I'm not a studio engineer. To take a $1500 microphone on the road is (a) scary and (b) dangerous. Billy Cobham used *U-87s* on all his drums—tom-toms

continued on page 78

Michael Delugg

MS: I just heard Barry Manilow's new live album. You were telling me that you used the Countryman mic's, which are like the Sony clip-ons.
MD: Right. It's a condenser mic' which I generally don't like on the drums. Barry's road sound chief was using them on the road in Europe because they didn't have the space to use the mic's we'd been using on the larger U.S. stages.
MS: The drum sound on that record is unbelieveable. It's hard for me to conceptualize that clean sound in a live recording situation. That's got to really put you to the test.
MD: The other nice thing I had going for me was the Royal Albert Hall, which is a bitch of a hall. That room sounds just wonderful. Even without too much drums in the monitors over the P.A., just hearing the drums all over the room on top of that tight drum sound just opened up the whole world.
MS: Who's the drummer?
MD: Bud Harner. He's strong; rock steady. He's real good. Paul Anka uses him. The guy's a joy to work with too. He'll do anything.
MS: In a live situation, we're not talking about the same thing as in a studio where everything can be baffled off and separate. A live situation is just exactly what you see onstage, which makes it extremely difficult, if not almost impossible—from an engineer's standpoint—to get a clean sound. Because everybody's spilling into everything else.
MD: The drums are bleeding into the percussion. The percussionist was wearing two lapel mic's, because he's got about a seven-foot diameter where he's running around playing timpani, vibes, xylophone, chimes and congas.
MS: Why two mic's? In case one goes down?
MD: One mic' was up there for wind

Armin Steiner

MS: I wanted to talk to you about recording drums and recording orchestras.
AS: I think we should first trace the history of what has gone down over the years. Studios were designed to be used as an ensemble device. People all played and were listening to each other. The rooms were very live. The role of a drummer, in those days, was mainly brushes and cymbals and very light things, just to keep time. In many cases the drums weren't even miked. When I started out in this business, they used to use one *RCA-44* or a 77—whatever we had available at the time—hanging over a complete drumset. And the drumset consisted of a bass, a snare drum, a couple of toms, maybe a hi-hat and a couple of overhead cymbals, if even that. Even in the big band recordings, very few microphones were used. It wasn't until ten or twelve years ago we decided that we'd use a bass drum microphone. But, what has happened is that the feeling of ensemble has diminished to the point where studios have become totally dead. The feeling of ensemble isn't there. The feeling of ensemble is only made through a headphone, it's not made by musicians listening to each other.
MS: This is really interesting because nobody else has touched on this. I don't even think about it. I just accept it because I have to deal with it every day.

AS: Many of the young engineers today unfortunately never had that background, so they don't know. I think many of them have enormous talent, but I think that the key to it all is that people go for individual sounds rather than going for music. They get very enamoured with a bass drum, which maybe in itself, is the key to the record. I'm not saying it is or it isn't. But it also has to have support. Man cannot live by bass drum alone. Or a snare drum, or a hi-hat, or anything else! Basically a drum's an instrument that cannot play a melody,

Electro- Voice DS35

AKG C-12

AKG C-414EB

A Miking Glossary

A microphone is a transducer; it converts acoustical (sound) energy into electrical energy. In an onstage situation, that electrical energy goes through what is called the "sound chain" to be reproduced as amplified acoustical energy through the loudspeaker. A basic "sound chain" would be (1) A sound source, such as a voice or musical instrument, (2) Microphone (3) Microphone mixer (4) Amplifier (5) Loudspeakers. The most important component of a microphone is usually hidden from view. This is the cartridge. Within the microphone housing, the cartridge actually processes acoustical energy—giving its own individuality to it—and turns that sound into electrical energy. There is no single "best" cartridge design. Each differs in the way it converts sound to electrical energy.
The Dynamic Microphone: One of the most reliable and rugged designs for live stage reproduction of voice or instruments. The moving element of the dynamic microphone is a coil of wire attached to a diaphragm suspended over a magnetic structure. Sound waves vibrate the diaphragm and coil which moves in relation to the magnet. This motion generates a varying electrical signal which passes through the conductor into the sound

chimes and stuff like that. The other one was to pick up the congas and the bongos. Meanwhile, I've got the drums bleeding into that and I've also got the drums bleeding into Barry, who's standing right in front of the drums.

MS: So how does it come out so clean?

MD: I work my ass off! But the energy was there too. It's got to be there in the first place.

MS: Okay, so in this particular situation you used Countrymen for everything? What did you do for overheads?

MD: We added two AKG 451s. I added those just for the truck. They didn't want it in the house. I actually ended up not using very much of it because the Countryman is an omni-microphone. I ended up with enough cymbals on the tom-tom mic's.

MS: Can you explain briefly what an omni-pattern is?

MD: It basically means that it's non-directional; it picks up at 360 degrees. Every omni-directional microphone, even though it's non-directional, has a different sound as you get around different ends of the microphone. We fussed with the mic's a little bit and found the best position where the leakage was the nicest sounding. We spent three days at Sheppardon Studios rehearsing where I had a chance to catch up, move microphones around a little, and do some fine tuning before we went into the hall.

MS: But then everything changes once you get into the hall.

MD: Everything changes a little bit, but at least I knew where I wanted the mic's.

MS: Did you use the Countryman for a snare drum mic', or did you use a different snare drum mic'?

MD: I added a Sennheiser *441* on the snare. I insisted on that one. It's my favorite snare drum mic' and I use it all the time on snare drums. In the studio I generally use a *441* on the snare, a Sennheiser *421* on all the tom-toms and an Electro-Voice *RE-20* on the bass drum. On overheads I generally go with the AKG *45Is* with a pad.

MS: A pad is something that pads the microphone down so that it's not so hot coming into the board.

MD: Right. The thing about condenser mi-

conlinued on page 77

but it's absolutely essential for what we do today in the commercial field. I think most engineers don't think anything about tone. They think of a "splat," or a "blat," or a percussive sound, but they don't think that a drum has a natural tone, a timbre, a sonority if you will. On the other side of that is that most drummers don't know how to tune their instruments very well. I think an immediate conflict comes about even in a dead environment.

MS: I like my drums to sing a little bit. It's disappointing to me when I hear what sounds good to me in the studio, and then on the playback all I hear is the attack.

AS: The problem is close miking on every single drum because the engineer wants to have control. I've had a very interesting philosophy all the years I've been doing this. That is that I very seldom talk to the drummer unless it's completely out of the ballpark. I'd rather not bug the drummer. I'd rather let him do his thing. My job should be to make that sound musical. In many cases, the better the drummer is, the less you have to do.

We spoke of Jimmy Keltner before. Jimmy has a set of wonderful sounding drums. They're very large sounding. Your kit sounds excellent. Ronnie Tutt has an exceptional sound. You can take those drums and put them in the hall, the men's room, or whatever, and they'll still sound good.

MS: A guy whose drums I always thought sounded good was Jimmy Gordon.

AS: Jimmy is a musician. Jimmy can sit and play the piano and he can play vibraphone. He listens to what goes on. And Keltner's certainly one of the best rock drummers in the world, yet he can play other things beautifully.

When I started out in this business, the two drummers were Hal Blaine and Earl Palmer. It was a different kind of thing. We were working with the early Motown records which were all 2 and 4 drumming. We created sounds that British engineers later told me they marveled at. They didn't know how we could get the snare drum to sound that way, or the bass drum. We were starting to add elements to the drumkit which we know today as the "commer-

continued on page 80

chain. Dynamic microphones can handle very high sound levels without overloading. They produce a clean, smooth, detailed sound.

The Condenser Microphone: Uses a charged condenser capsule. When sound waves move the diaphragm, it produces an electrical signal. That signal must pass through an internal circuit powered by either an internal battery or external power supply. These microphones typically impart a smooth, wide range, and crisp sound.

The Ribbon Microphone: Sound energy vibrates a metal ribbon. The ribbon moves in relation to a magnet, generating an electrical signal, which travels through the conductor into the sound chain. Because of innovations in other microphone designs, these microphones are becoming less common.

Polar Response: This is a measure of how well a microphone accepts sounds coming from different directions. The two most common polar patterns are unidirectional (cardioid) and omnidirectional. A cardioid pattern has a heart-shaped polar pattern; an omnidirectional microphone approximates a circular polar pattern.

The Unidirectional (Cardioid) Microphone: Accepts sound mostly from one direction —in front—while reducing pickup of sounds from sides and rear. It focuses on the desired sound source while rejecting room acoustics, feedback, and other instruments.

The Omnidirectional Microphone: Accepts sound equally from all sides. Should be used when feedback is not a problem. Can be very effective when you want to cover more than one instrument with a single microphone.

JIM GORDON

by Scott Fish

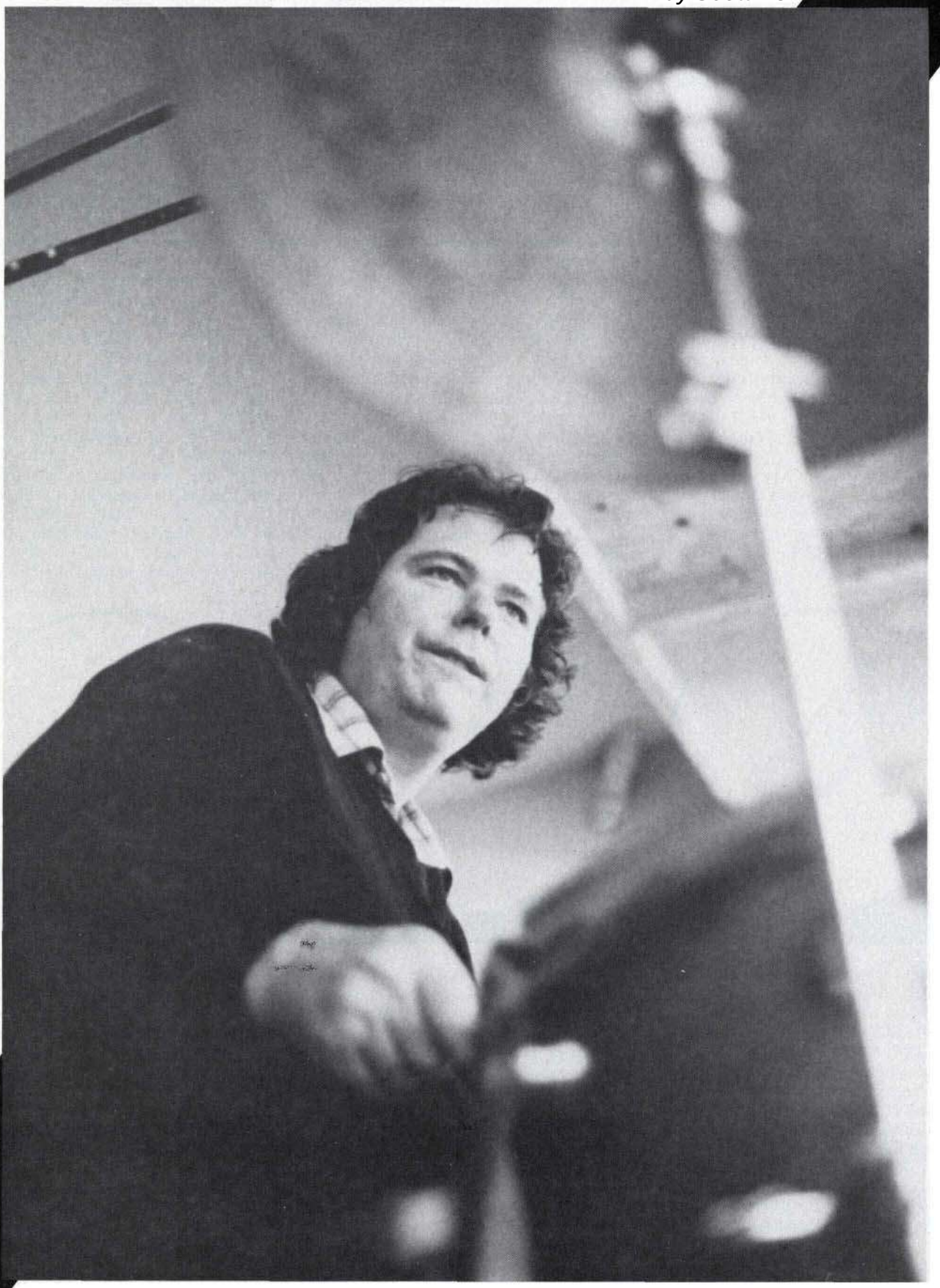


Photo by Eric Keltner

NOTHING BUT MUSIC

This conversation took place one night while I was sitting at home in New Jersey and Jim was at home 3000 miles away in California. There's a special anxiety or apprehensiveness that precedes an interview. An interviewer is, in a sense, a Peeping Tom. He's required to confront a stranger—usually a celebrity—and pry into that person's life. Whether an interviewer's intentions are honest or dishonest, he's still prying, and there's forever a feeling that reminds me of Dorothy's first encounter with the Munchkins and The Good Witch of the North. Dorothy has landed in Munchkinland; she steps out of her house and hears *the Munchkins, but they won't come out of hiding. She wants to know* why. *Dorothy realizes why when Glenda (the Good Witch) asks her, "What they want to know is, are you a* good *witch or a* bad *witch?" Dorothy answers, "I'm not a witch at all!" The Munchkins laugh in disbelief and don't come out of hiding until Glenda puts her stamp of approval on Dorothy. The unspoken question of every person I've interviewed seems to be: "Are you a good witch or a bad witch?"*

I came very close, I feel, to convincing Jim Gordon that I was a good witch. We spoke a long time. His most visible periods of drumming were with Delaney & Bonnie & Friends, Joe Cocker's Mad Dogs & Englishmen, and the legendary group Derek & The Dominos. But the invisible part of Gordon's career is that of one of the busiest and most talented studio drummers of the late '60s and '70s. Jim is a thoroughly trained musician, as comfortable with percussion, mallets and piano as he is with a drumset.

Jim Gordon is the product of many hours of self-discipline and hard work. He didn't "luck in" to the studio scene. His father wasn't in the music business. He knew the requirements of a first-call studio player and he met those requirements. He learned from the masters before him, like Earl Palmer and Hal Blaine, and he, in turn, is a role model for many of the top studio drummers who have come after him.

SF: Could you pinpoint the event in your life that made you decide to become a professional drummer?

JG: When I was a kid I took drum lessons, because when I was eight, I was tapping on all kinds of things. I made a little drumset out of tin cans and sticks, so my folks gave me lessons. I got into a few orchestras with some youth bands, got a taste of some recording, and decided that that's what I'd really like to do.

Then I started playing in some clubs in L.A., playing rock 'n' roll when I was fifteen or sixteen. I really enjoyed playing the rock 'n' roll more than jazz. From there I got a job playing with The Everly Brothers, and from *there* I said, "This is great. This is for me."

SF: How old were you when you joined The Everly Brothers?

JG: Seventeen. I was on the road with them while going to school at the same time. We'd travel during the summer. I took a year of college when I was about eighteen and I was going to be a music teacher. I decided that when I was about fifteen, I guess. I started doing little demo dates. I was in a band with a guy named Mike Post. We worked around and one thing led to another and I just decided that this is what I wanted to do.

SF: Did you have a lot of encouragement from home?

JG: No, actually. Well . . . it wasn't *too* bad. They put up with my playing. But, no, there wasn't too much encouragement. They wanted me to be a lawyer or something.

SF: Did you study keyboards or other instruments?

JG: I sure did. All through high school and into college for a year.

SF: Did that help your drum playing?

JG: Yeah, it did. And I listened to a lot of records. When I was

really young I used to play to all these records like Bill Haley and The Comets, Elvis Presley, The Everly Brothers, all those guys. I just loved it. I was a real fanatic about it.

SF: How did you meet The Everly Brothers?

JG: I was working at this club down in Hollywood and their bass player happened to drop by, heard me play, and asked me if I wanted to be in The Everly Brothers' band. They gave me their book. I took it home and checked it out, gave it some thought and said, "Yeah. I really want to do that." It was a big thrill. We toured in a little bus all over the Midwest. That's where they played mainly. We went to England a lot. We played over there in '63 and '64 and that was great! I met The Beatles and we did a great tour with The Rolling Stones, Bo Diddley, Little Richard and The Everly Brothers.

SF: Did you study jazz drumming?

JG: Oh yeah. I tried to play most everything I could. I was gearing myself to be a studio musician, so I tried to really play all the different styles I could find so I'd know what I was doing.

SF: Were you able to associate with studio drummers?

JG: I did some stuff with The Everlys over at Warner Brothers and I got to meet Hal Blaine and Earl Palmer. I talked to them as much as I could. When I got in the studios I started out playing a lot of percussion, like tambourine, timpani, xylophone, vibes and instruments like that. So, I got to work with Hal and Earl a whole lot, and sometimes Shelly Manne or Larry Bunker. I got to sit back and watch them work. Then Hal started getting real busy and started asking me if I wanted to do some of his dates. I said, "Say no more!" I got some of his accounts and from there, people started listening to me and I got to work around.

SF: You had no problem with timps and mallet instruments?

JG: I studied all that. I wasn't great but I could certainly get by.

SF: How good was your sightreading on those instruments?

"DEVELOPING AN EAR IS THE MOST IMPORTANT THING YOU COULD POSSIBLY DO ... IF YOU CAN'T READ, YOU'VE GOT TO BE ABLE TO HEAR. IF YOU CANT HEAR AND FIGURE OUT THE TUNES... YOU'RE NOT GOING TO BE ABLE TO PLAY."

Photo by Eric Keltner

JG: Not bad. I studied marimba with a real good teacher in town named Earl Hatz. He really ran me through the mill with four mallet things and lots of Mozart and Bach. So I did okay, but I really wanted to play the drums.

SF: How did you divide your time between studying drumset and all those other instruments?

JG: Actually, the mallets came later. I spent most of my time on the practice pad and my drumset. Then I ran into Jim Horn working a gig in the Valley. Jim said, "You ought to get into recording. You play real good. Do you play any mallets or anything like that?" I said, "Yeah, a little bit." He says, "Well, that's a good way to get in. Tell them you're a real versatile kind of player, and that you could cover what they needed to have covered." That helped me to decide to really get into playing vibes and stuff.

I also did some symphonies when I was in junior high and high school, and in the Junior Philharmonic, Burbank Symphony and places like that. I was real lucky that my high school music teacher was a percussionist, and he was also my private teacher. Bob Winslow. We had a percussion ensemble after school and *that* gave me a lot of experience.

SF: When you were in the studio with Hal and Earl, were you able to speak to them about *what* they were doing and *why* they were doing certain things?

JG: Absolutely. Those two were real friendly and open. There was a ton of work around in '63, '64 and '65. More than they could cover. So if anybody could play halfway decent, they were real willing to share with you.

SF: Was there much chart reading in the studios at that time?

JG: There were both. There were two kinds of dates. You'd have

Photo by Eric Keltner

"I THINK ALL THIS STUDIO WORK HURT BANDS A LOT. THERE AREN'T AS MANY BANDS AS THERE SHOULD BE BECAUSE EVERYBODY WANTS TO GET INTO THE STUDIOS AND MAKE ALL THOSE BUCKS."

the arranger come in with everything all written out—and that was real standard. We'd do four or five tunes in three hours for a group like Gary Puckett and The Union Gap. All that stuff was written out. There was stuff like The Beach Boys and The Mamas and Papas—which Hal did—where they'd play the tune and you'd either write yourself a little chart or make up a part. I thought that was more creative.

SF: Was it that the drummers in the '60s bands like The Beach Boys just couldn't play well enough at that time?

JG: They could play. The Beach Boys all played on their first records over there at Capitol when it was still a studio. But, then this idea came along to hire studio musicians. You could get a better product and a more professional job, so they started calling Hal, and Joe Osborne on bass, me and Earl and those kind of guys.

SF: How many singles and albums are you on where nobody knows you're the drummer?

JG: All together? Maybe two hundred albums. I don't know. A lot! I did a lot of records.

SF: Did it bother you that a listener would think he was hearing the drummer with Gary Puckett and The Union Gap, for example, when it was really Jim Gordon?

JG: No, that didn't bother me. Not at all. Everybody in town had a little community here. Everybody would talk to each other about what they were doing, and we all knew what we were doing, and that seemed to take care of anything like that. But, it didn't bother me. Sometimes I'd be out and say to somebody, "Hey, that's me on that record." And the people would say, "Oh sure! Yeah. Yeah." So I gave up on that.

SF: Are there any of your records from that time that you feel are

continued on page SS

Inside The World Of Drum Corps

AN OVERVIEW

27th Lancers, Revere, Mass.
Photo courtesy of Slingerland Drum Company

Marching percussion is the newest and most exciting singular facet in the rapidly changing and developing world of percussion. During the last ten years, drum and bugle corps have become nationally visible. Their popularity, especially their appeal to a wide audience of musicians and non-musicians, has launched the corps-style explosion. *Percussion manufacturers have expanded their lines of marching percussion instruments and have found them to be significant money-makers. Drum corps arrangements are produced by many music publishers for use with high school and college marching bands, and national television coverage of drum corps championships has brought marching percussion into family living rooms across the country.*

This article will take you into the stimulating world of marching percussion. We'll look at how marching percussion instruments developed over the years, what makes drum corps the new American art form, and what kind of people are the instructors and judges of these corps. We'll talk with an all-star cast of marching percussion experts, examine a survey of new corps-style rudiments, and finally, a complete source listing will lead you to some of the best available rudimental books and drum corps magazines.

Drum and bugle corps have been the decisive contributing influence to the development of the marching percussion ensemble. Today's drum corps have become a very popular activity. There are over 400 drum and bugle corps in the United States and Canada. Most of these corps are junior corps made up of young men and women up to the age of twenty-one, with the average age of the competitive corps being seventeen to eighteen years old. The size of each corps will vary, with the average membership between seventy and eighty, never exceeding 128 members.

Each corps consists of three major sections:

1) Colorguard: Flags and rifles
2) Brass: Soprano bugles, flugelhorns, mellophones, baritones and contra-bass bugles
3) Percussion

Instrumentation

One characteristic of the corps style is new and expanded percussion instrumentation. The typical percussion section of a 1950 drum and bugle corps consisted of: three snare drums, three single tenor drums, two scotch bass drums and a pair of crash cymbals. As the corps started to grow in size and popularity in the 1960s, percussion instructors began incorporating different percussion instruments. The Hawthorne Caballeros were the first corps to incorporate timbales into their show. The "Cabs" later used bongos, congas and steel drums, to produce an authentic Latin sound.

In the mid-'60s, Gerry Shellmer of the Boston Crusaders was one of the first to use a small bass drum along with a large concert bass drum. Marching groups today use four to six different-sized tuned bass drums in order to create a melodic bass line.

The year 1967 saw many innovations for the marching percussion section, including the concept of multiple-toms, which resulted in timp-tom trios and marching timpani. In 1969, the Boston Crusaders used marching keyboard instruments, however, these were not accepted in competitions until 1974.

In 1972 the corps were first allowed to use accessory percussion instruments such as cowbells, triangles, claves and tambourines. Since 1974, marching xylophones and bells carried horizontally were used, along with marching *Roto-toms* (which were added in '75). Marching marimbas, vibraphones and chimes have been added since then to fill the mallet choir.

Thus, today's marching percussion ensembles include: snare drums, timp-tom trios or quad-toms, tuned bass drums, timpani, various sizes of cymbals, accessory instruments and keyboard percussion instruments. The contemporary marching percussion ensemble is a complete SATB choir capable of producing melody, harmony and varied timbres, while still remaining the rhythmic backbone of the marching band and drum and bugle corps.

Corps Year

Though the corps will rehearse throughout the year, all competitions and most performances occur during the months of June, July and August. Auditions for most corps begin in the fall of the year. Rehearsals are usually held once or twice a week up until the first of the year. Marching and maneuvering (M&M) rehearsals usually start at this point so the members can start learning the drills. The more competitive corps continually increase their rehearsal schedule, and by the time school is out, some will be practicing almost every night of the week. The 11 1/2- to 13-minute show is then completed, and the competitions begin in June. Each corps will perform the same show throughout the summer, making minor revisions in their

Photo courtesy of Drum Corps World

routines, climaxing the season with the national championship in mid-August.

Drum Corps International

Drum Corps International (DCI) is the governing body of all junior drum corps. DCI was created in 1973 to organize rules, select qualified judges and organize contests and championships. This organization schedules over eighty drum corps competitions each summer, which consist of the best corps in the country who are members of DCI. They will group these shows into tours for the DCI corps, lasting from four to five weeks at a time. Each corps usually owns four buses plus a semi which is used as the equipment truck. The corps who compete on a national level have an annual budget of somewhere between $75,000-$200,000, with some as high as $750,000.

Instructors

Each drum corps has several instructors who work with each section of the corps on a regular basis. They are specialists who either write and arrange the music, or teach it to each respective section. Instructors can be professional musicians, band directors, choreographers to write the marching portion of the show, or former corps members who work with drum corps as a hobby. They all work together so that all sections of the corps fit together to produce a musical and visual extravaganza.

The percussion section is taught by a number of instructors under the direction of the head percussion instructor (who is usually also the percussion arranger). Each segment (group of like instruments) of the percussion section will have an individual instructor to take responsibility for every note and movement that each player makes.

Judging

Competitions are adjudicated by a highly select panel of judges. These judges are divided into three major areas by their appropriate field of expertise: Marching and maneuvering, brass, and percussion. Each area is given a specific number of points and the corps with the highest score becomes the winner of the competition. Since the scoring is broken down to tenths of a point, the competition can become very fierce. For example, here are the results of the top six corps from the 1982 DCI Championship. The highest possible score is 100.

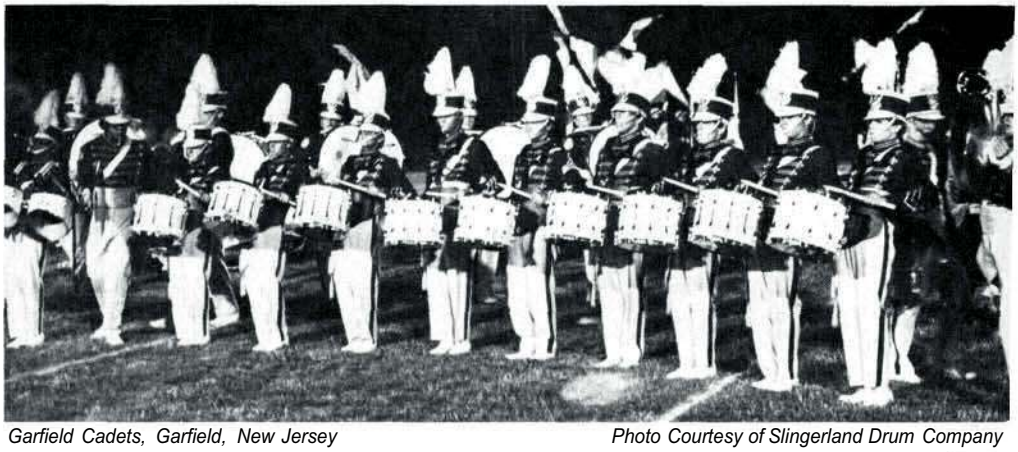
1) Santa Clara Vanguard—94.00
2) Blue Devils—93.70
3) Madison Scouts—92.60
4) 27th Lancers—91.90
5) Phantom Regiment—90.85
6) Bridgemen—90.80

The percussion section of each corps is adjudicated by three individuals judging the following three areas:

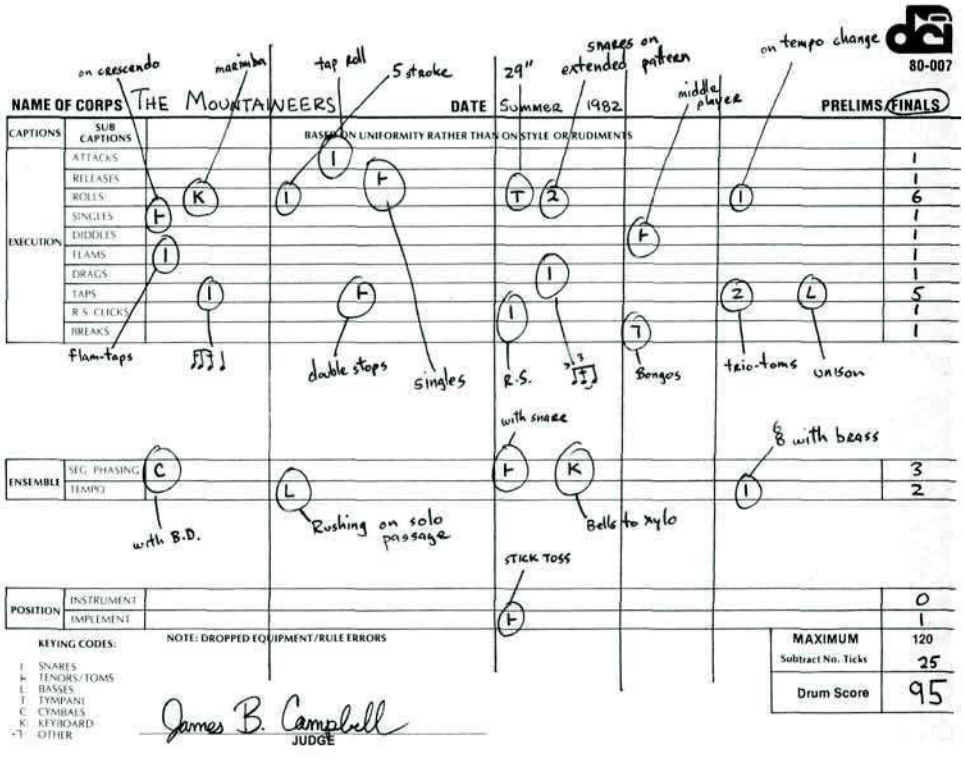
1. General Effect (GE): This judge gives points to the corps depending on how effectively the percussion music is written, performed and how well it coordinates with the brass, color guard and the drill.

2. Percussion Analysis (PA): This judge gives credit depending on how difficult the percussion score is, and how it is interpreted musically.

3. Execution The percussion execution judge deducts a tenth of a point for each performance mistake that is made. Every non-uniform sound and movement is considered a tick (1/10 off), and is deducted from the total score. In other words, if the snare line plays a series of six-stroke rolls and does not achieve a clean sound, chances are someone made an error and it is ticked. Below you will find a sample of a drum execution sheet filled out by DCI Percussion Judge, Jim Campbell.



Garfield Cadets, Garfield, New Jersey *Photo Courtesy of Slingerland Drum Company*



How would drum corps experience help someone's drumset ability?

Tuthill: Playing in a drum corps will definitely develop one's technique. If you play tri-toms or quad-toms in a corps, I'm sure it will increase your mobility on the drumset. As a matter of fact, there a number of rudiments that can be used on a set. Steve Gadd, who was a member of the Rochester Crusaders Drum and Bugle Corps, comes to mind with his use of paradiddle inversions played between snare and hi-hat. These paradiddle combinations really produce a funky sound. Billy Cobham, another great drummer who played in the Long Island Sunrisers Drum and Bugle Corps, has excellent technique, which is probably a carryover from his drum corps experience.

George Tuthill

Director and percussion instructor for the Sky Ryders Drum and Bugle Corps of Hutchinson, Kansas; clinician for Slingerland Drum Company and percussion consultant for Hal Leonard Publishing.

Drum corps drumming will help to build power and stamina which is ideal for rock drummers. I don't really know if it will help your jazz drumming, because it is so precision oriented. Most jazz players don't want that tight, precise sound and strive for a looser style.

Campbell: Performing in drum corps demands that the percussionist move to intricate drill patterns while playing an instrument. This skill helps to develop drumset ability and musicianship in several ways. Due to a constant musical pulse, a strong internal clock is developed in the player. It reinforces a drummer's ability to keep time.

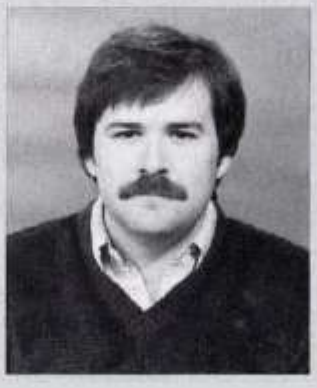
The coordination of hands and feet while marching and playing leads to a better understanding of drumset independence and the demand to mentally handle output to different parts of the body.

Because the drum corps percussionist must master the ability to perform with exact synchronization to thirty or more other percussionists, as well as up to sixty brass players, a strong sense of uniformity is developed. The drum corps player *knows* how to play tightly within an ensemble.

Most drum corps units rehearse long hours and travel all summer. Stamina is certainly developed, but also the constant traveling and performing gives one an accurate experience of road-life for a professional musician.

What are the major differences between corps style and traditional rudimental technique?

Tuthill: The biggest difference is *Style.* In drum corps we take a group of people and teach them to play exactly the same way, the key word being *uniformity.* Various drum corps instructors have used a number of different drumming styles such as finger technique, high-arm technique, wrist technique, stiff arm with a great amount of muscular tension, or a loose wrist style making use of rebound. Any of these techniques can and *do* work. The goal is to perform whatever style in a uniform mannner and to execute all unison rhythms simultaneously. That *is* corps style.



Jim Campbell

Assistant professor of music at Montana State University and instructor of percussion and jazz studies. Former percussion instructor of the Guardsmen Drum and Bugle Corps of Schaumberg, Illinois.

Hong: I feel that corps-style percussion places a greater emphasis on technique. Percussionists are asked to perform patterns at precise stick heights, which takes a great amount of control. Rudiments are played over a wider range of tempos and at a greater number of dynamic levels. Tuned bass drum parts have become very complex, for example, sequential patterns such as a walking bass line up and down the drums. Timp-tom trio players are often called upon to perform complex cross-sticking patterns and numerous roll and drag figures. Percussion arrangers are always trying to explore new sounds and new tehniques in order to produce the *right* sound on the field.

Sherman Hong

Associate professor of music at the University of Southern Mississippi and author of The Percussion Section: Developing The Corps Style, *published by The Band Shed.*

Do you prefer matched or traditional grip for the marching snare drum?

DeLucia: I prefer traditional grip. I agree with the standard arguments that favor matched grip: easier to teach, easier to learn, more natural, all other percussion instruments require matched grip. However, I believe that the traditional left hand, once mastered, offers the player a wider range of devices with which he or she can propel the stick (wrist, thumb, index finger, thumb/index combinations). Let the style of music determine which grip you use. My advice to teachers and students is to teach and learn both grips at an early stage of development.

Campbell: If a traditional shoulder sling

and leg rest are used to carry the snare drum it would make sense to use traditional grip, because the drum sits off-center to the body. This is the reason for the origin of the traditional grip. With the advent of the snare carrier, it's possible to center the drum to the player. The use of matched grip is more logical with this type of set-up. I prefer to use the matched grip because students who begin their training with bass drum or tenor drums don't have to learn a new grip when they advance to the snare drum.

Is it really necessary to use those large snare drum sticks?

Hong: Yes and no. Heavy sticks produce a large, deep sound if the drum is tuned properly. *2B's* are adequate for young junior-high players, but the S model sticks are needed for older groups in order to produce more volume. I recommend the *2S* or *3S,* or a stick which has a fairly large diameter and is weighted in the neck. Avoid a stick with a long, tapered shoulder which produces a tinny sound, because it won't get the lower partials of the drum sounding. I also prefer a headless stick or a round bead, which will initiate the lower sounding partials better than an oval bead.

Dennis DeLucia

Percussion instructor for the Bridgemen and Sunrisers Drum and Bugle Corps; clinician for Slingerland Drum Company. Percussion works available from Hal Leonard Publishing.

How do you achieve uniform stick height in a snare line?

Tuthill: My system for teaching uniform stick height is to measure the distance which the stick travels above the head before striking it. I correlate this distance with the various dynamic levels in the hope of instilling a uniform stick height with my percussionists. For instance, a 1" stroke would be piano (p), 3" = mp,5" = mf, 7" = f, 9" = ff and 11" = fff. This method gives a physical way of controlling the volume levels and teaches the players a uniform style of stick height. This concept can help any drummer who has problems trying to obtain an equal volume level in each hand. If one hand dominates the other, chances are they're lifting that stick higher in the air than the other. Practice getting both sticks up at the same height above the drum to produce a consistent sound.

Fred Sanford

Product Development Manager and marching percussion staff clinician for Ludwig Industries. Former percussion instructor for the Santa Clara Vanguard Drum and Bugle Corps of Santa Clara, California.

What sort of exercises help to develop the double-stroke open roll?

DeLucia: Most drum corps use three types of rolls: the open (thirty-second note), the triplet (based on an eighth-note triplet pulse) and the multiple-bounce roll (buzz). The open, double-stroke roll is the most frequently used, and it can be developed with a couple of simple exercises. I suggest that you mentally pulse eighth notes while playing sixteenth notes, so each time your right stick plays, it's perfectly aligned with your mental eighth notes. Once this feels comfortable, let each stick bounce once to create thirty-second notes while maintaining the same alignment of the mental eighth-note concept.

Do you introduce your beginning students to rudiments before teaching them to read music?

Tuthill: I teach my students how to read first and then teach them how to make rudiments out of the sticking patterns they read. The very word *rudiment* does not fit what we term as rudiment today. Rudiments, to me, are down strokes, up strokes, multiple bounce and bounce strokes. These four strokes can make any of the so called "rudiments." For instance, the word "paradiddle." This term was derived from a system of instruction prior to notation. I don't think we should make the notation fit the system. We should make the old system fit the notation.

Ward Durret

Marching percussion coordinator of the Slingerland Drum Company, and associate marching band director of Glenbrook North High School in Illinois. Instructor of a number of drum corps and two national championship marching bands.

Campbell: I would recommend any percussion student have a thorough knowledge of drum rudiments. Rudimental drumming is an important contribution to the percussion world. However, I also try to influence them to study all idioms of percussion. Drumset, keyboard, timpani, hand drumming and the study of ethnic systems are *all* important to a serious percussion student.

Do you feel the new International Drum Rudiments list will be an improvement over the Standard 26?

Tuthill: Yes I do. As a matter of fact, I've become very involved in the International Drum Rudiments project which is sponsored by the Percussive Arts Society. Once this new collection of rudiments is ap-

continued on page 100

CORPS STYLE RUDIMENTS

CORPS STYLE RUDIMENTS

Most corps make use of a wide number of rudiments, including the Standard 26 American Drum Rudiments. Various rolls and drag rudiments are often found, and usually performed in an open manner. Below are just a few Swiss rudiments and variations of existing rudiments that have been adopted over the years in drum corps performance.

Tap Flam

The tap flam is quite similar to the flam tap. Tap flams have a tendency to produce a heavier sound than flam taps which produce a more flowing sound.

Pataflafla

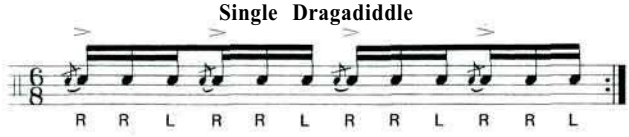
This rudiment can be performed singularly, off a flam, doubled, or connected with a flam paradiddle.

(Doubled)

Swiss **Army Triplet**

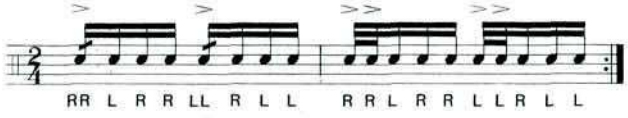
Swiss Army Triplets are probably the most common Swiss rudiment found in American performance. Swiss Triplets are often substituted for flam accents because they are more easily performed at quick tempos.

Single Dragadiddle



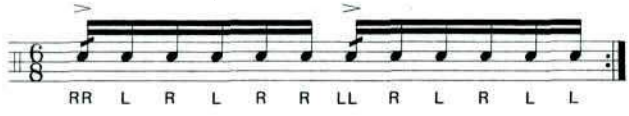
Double Dragadiddle

Proper Notation *Interpretation*

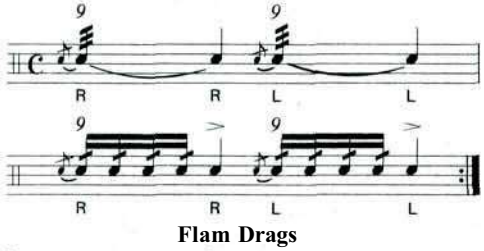


Flammed Rolls

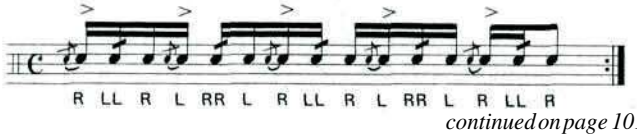
Placing the flam on the attack of a roll is a common practice in the Swiss rudimental style.



Flammed Nine Stroke



Flam Drags



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REFERENCE LISTING

The following publications are highly recommended for the development of rudimental snare drum technique and marching percussion ensembles.

RUDIMENTAL SNARE DRUM BOOKS

Chop Busters by Ron Fink: Fink Publishing Co.

Corps Style Drumming by Roger B. Willis: Studio P/R Inc.

Corps Style Snare Drum Dictionary by Jay A. Wanamaker: Alfred Publishing Co., Inc.

14 Modern Contest Solos, John S. Pratt: Belwin Mills Publishing Co.

N.A.R.D. Drum Solos: Ludwig Drum Co.

Stick Control, by George Lawrence Stone: George B. Stone, Inc.

Swing Solos for the Advanced Drummer, by Charley Wilcoxin: Ludwig Music Publishing Co.

The All-American Drummer, by Charley Wilcoxin: Ludwig Music Publishing Co.

MARCHING PERCUSSION ENSEMBLE METHODS & TEXTBOOKS

Building a Championship Drumline: The Bridgemen Drum Method, by Dennis DeLucia: Hal Leonard Publishing Co.

Championship Auxiliary Units, by Foster, Wanamaker, Duffer and Kowles: Alfred Publishing Co., Inc.

Corps Style Warm-Ups by Jay A. Wanamaker: Alfred Publishing Co., Inc.

Developing The Corps Style by Sherman Hong and Jim Hamilton: The Band Shed.

Marching Percussion Ensemble Method, by Will Rapp: Jenson Publications.

Precision Marching Percussion Ensemble Method, by Robert Buck: Alfred Publishing Co., Inc.

RELATED PUBLICATIONS

Competitive Drum Corps, by Jodeen F. Popp: Olympic Printing, Inc.

Drum Corps Contest Rules, Regulations and Interpretations: Drum Corps International

MAGAZINES

These publications contain listings and locations of drum corps contests, along with news items and articles.

Drum Corps World, P.O. Box 8052, Madison, Wi 53708.

Contest Guild, Drum Corps International, P.O. Box 413, Lombard, Il60148.

Drum Corps News, P.O. Box 108, Prudential Center, Boston, MA 02199.

Percussive Notes, Percussive Arts Society.

Photo courtesy of Drum Corps World

A DAY ON TOUR WITH THE PHANTOM REGIMENT

by Lauren Vogel

Following an evening performance, four buses pulled up in front of Fairview High School in Boulder, Colorado, about 1:OOam Saturday. Tired corps members piled out carrying capes, helmets and other remnants of the show. Almost immediately, everything was stored away and everyone hit the ol' sleeping bag for six hours of uninterrupted sleep.

As the sun rose, it illuminated a large commons room strewn with 128 sleeping bodies, open suitcases and all the other necessities of life on the road. By 7:30, everyone awakened to the smell of a hot breakfast and the rumor of hot showers in the locker rooms. Within an hour, the corps had assembled outside to begin another day of intense practice.

By 8:30, the percussion section began their usual warm-up under head percussion instructor, Marty Hurley: single-hand exercises to limber up, hand-to-hand exercises, timing exercises, roll exercises and dynamic control using stick height. At times, the whole section played in unison. Other times, snare and tenors performed roll patterns over a bass drum beat. The timpani worked on linear patterns, while the keyboard section practiced scales and modes.

At 10:00am, the full corps assembled in the high school stadium for a music rehearsal. Special attention was focused on balances between sections and other musical aspects of the show. The ever-present marching and maneuvering (M&M) instructors were on the field, correcting intervals and making continuous minor adjustments. The tenors tried several different types of mallets to see which would project best over the horns. The snares added a softer dynamic in one passage. Certain sections of the show were rehearsed several times until a satisfactory musical approach was found.

About 11:30, the corps took a short break. Coolers were brought to the field. On hot days, the corps can go through up to 120 gallons of lemonade, punch and G*atorade.* The horns and guard remained on the field for the M&M rehearsal while the drums moved off to work on the music. The two drum solos used in the show were rehearsed. Sections that had phased the night before were carefully practiced.

Lunchtime! The drummers carefully left their equipment in the shade under the watchful eye of a bus driver. Today there was a special treat: a videotape of the previous night's performance being shown in the cafeteria.

After lunch, and for the next two hours, the horns and guard worked with the M&M instructors while the drum line broke into sectionals. The ten-member snare line began a double-stroke open roll and marched across the field for an intense workout under Steve Hufford. Following a warm-up of rolls and rudiments, the snare line began to work on spots in the show. With a watchful eye on matching stick height, Steve added some new visual effects and continued the never-ending task of *cleaning the parts.*

Across the field, the four tenors were also hard at work with their coach, Mike Mann. In addition to the timing and roll patterns, the tenors combined those exercises with movement from drum to drum.

Under a tree near the school were the keyboard and timpani sections working under the direction of Bill Woods. Though the shade was relaxing, it was necessary to keep the keyboards in tune and to prevent any heat-related problems with the timpani. The bells, xylophone, marimba and vibes formed their own quartet, and the music from the whole show could easily be recognized, from bass line to melody.

The five-member bass drum section was rehearsing under the supervision of Dan Smith, with the help of "Dr. Beat," the ever-present metronone amplified through a speaker. They concentrated on timing and entrances in their complex linear bass line.

Last, but not least, the auxilliary percussion section (cymbals, chimes, gongs) were practicing with Scooter Wooten. These four players would add the flash and sparkle to the drum section with their cymbal choreography.

Marty Hurley circulated among all the sections, working on particular spots that had been observed by the judges the night before. He also added endless ideas of his own to the original drum score.

As rain clouds threatened on the horizon, the full corps gathered on the field for a final hour of rehearsal. After a complete run-through of the show, the corps had two hours to eat, shower and dress. Cymbals had to be polished and all the drums carefully tuned and wiped clean.

The snare line was outside warming up by 6:00. Everyone else joined them by 6:30 for a shortened version of the morning warm-up. As soon as the horns tuned, the last run-through was performed. All the

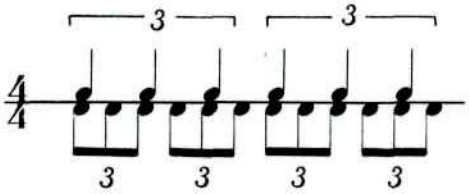
continued on page 101

by Nick Forte

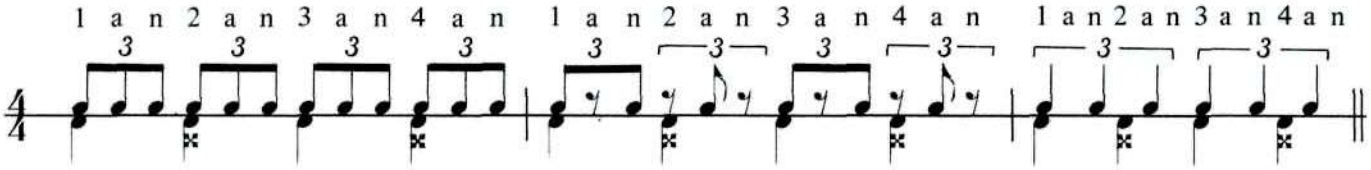
The Quarter-Note Triplet

In the last lesson, it was observed that the doubling of the notes in an eighth-note triplet, resulted in the construction of sixteenth-note triplets. If we reversed the procedure and omitted every other note of the eighth-note triplet, the results would be quarter-note triplets. See example #1.

Ex. 1

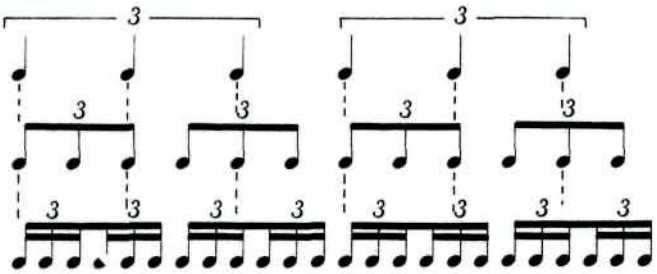


Practice the following line; it displays a logical progression in the development of quarter note triplets. Keep the bass and hi-hats in their proper place and in strict time. Count out loud as shown.



The chart in Example #2 lists the three triplet forms covered thus far.

Ex. 2

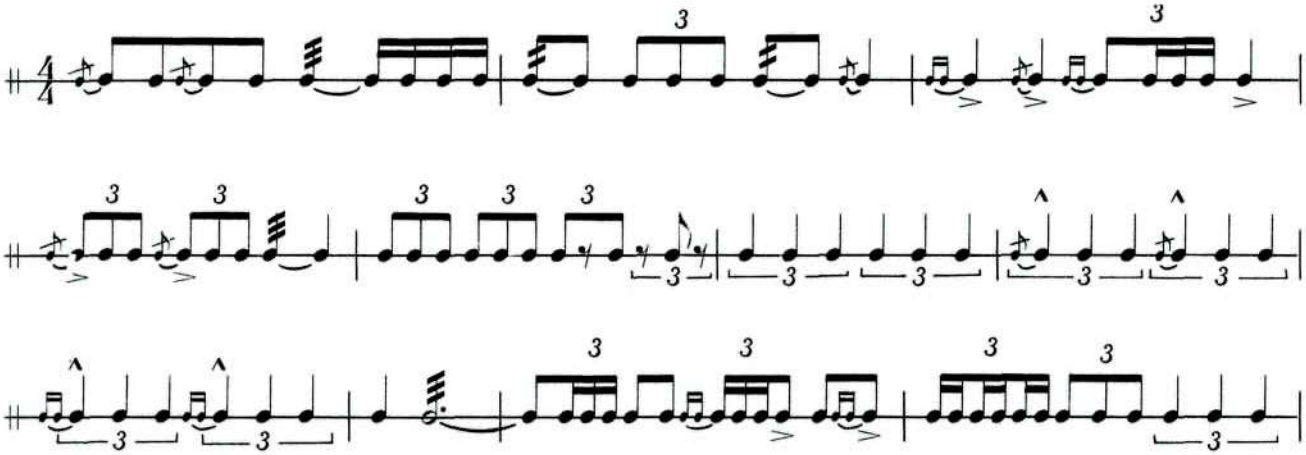


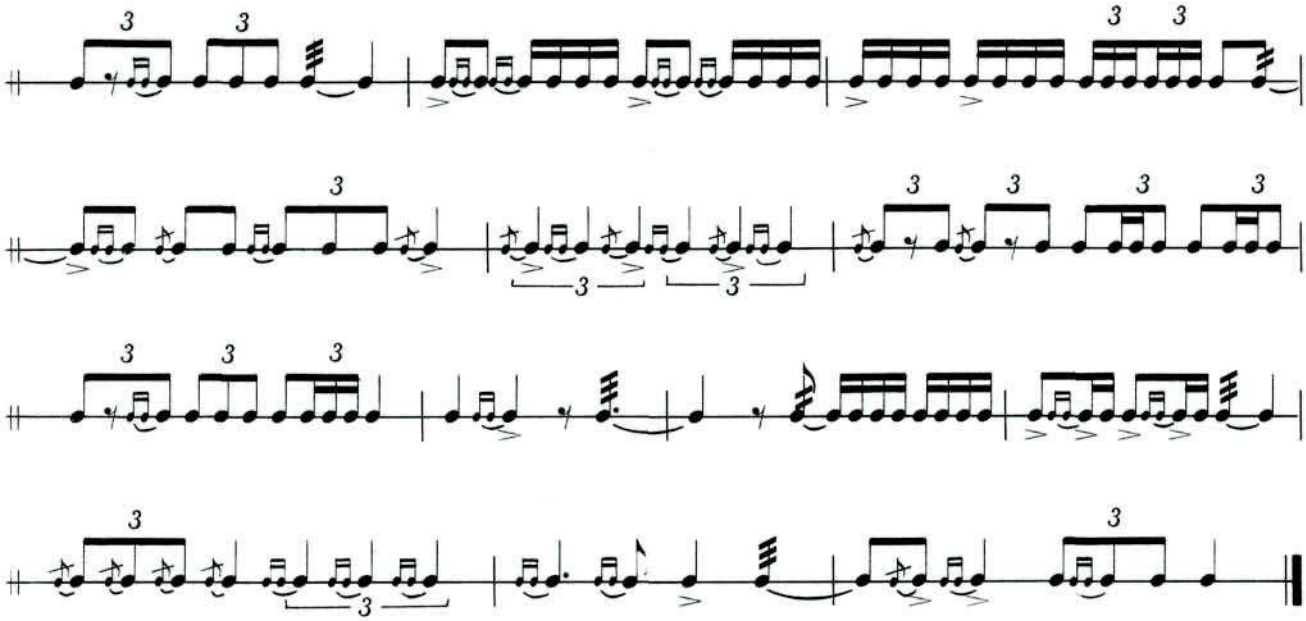
THE RUFF

The three-stroke ruff has two grace notes and a main note. The grace notes (like a flam) are usually played with the hand closest to the drum head at the time. Example #3, shows the sticking and two possible note configurations of the three-stroke ruff.

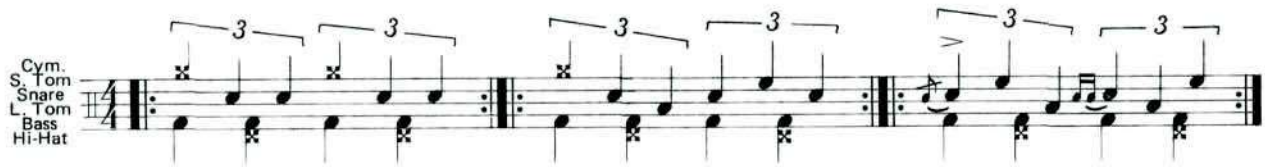
Ex.3

SNARE DRUM READING





DRUMSET EXERCISES



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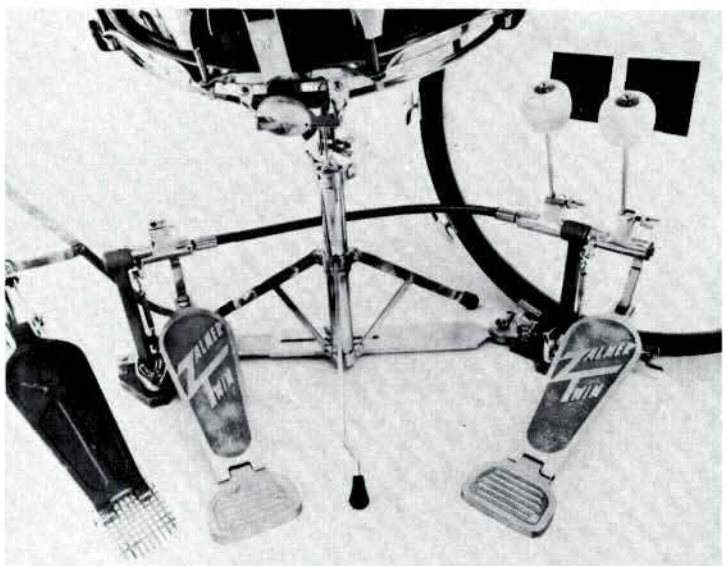
ZALMER TWIN PEDAL



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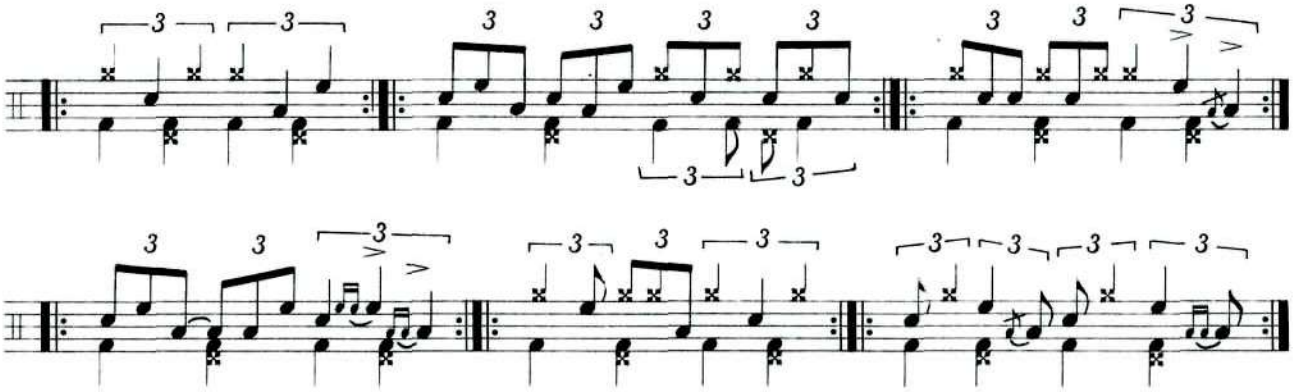
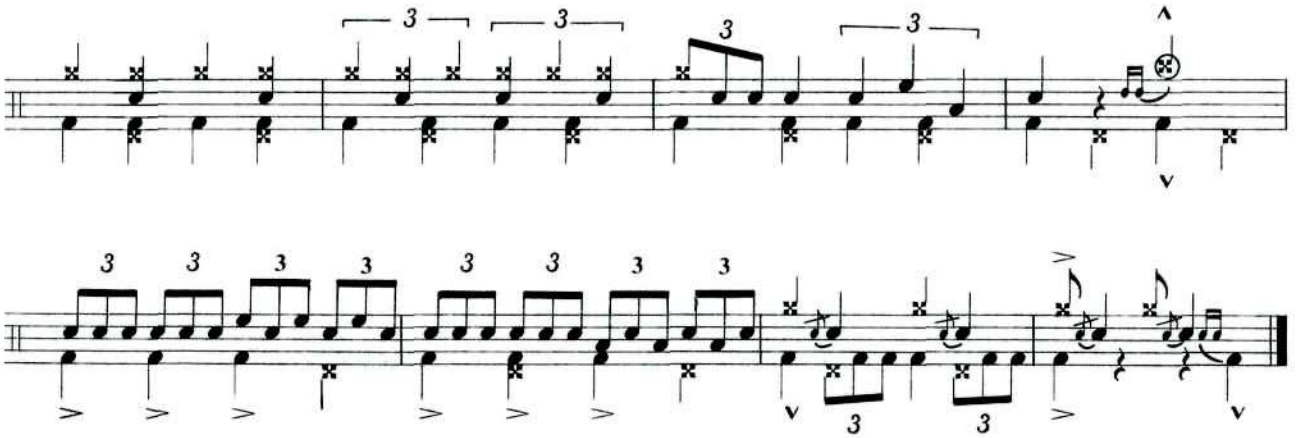


DRUMSET SOLO #1



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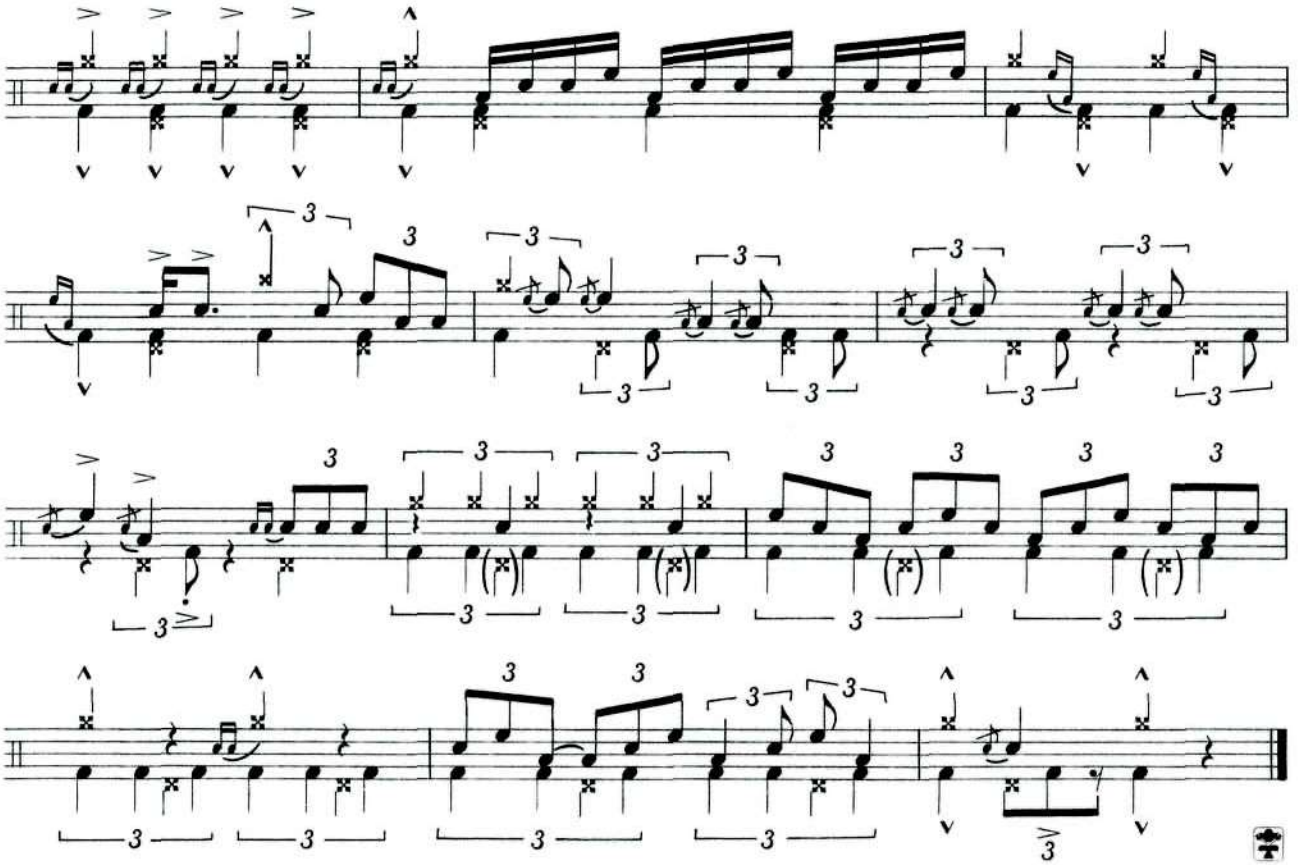
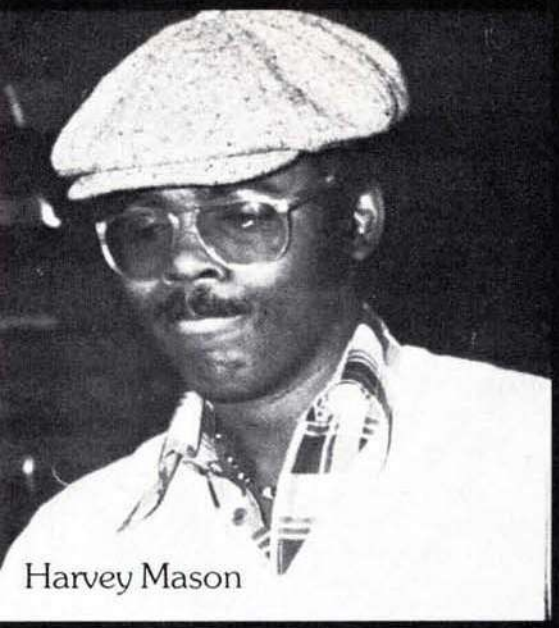
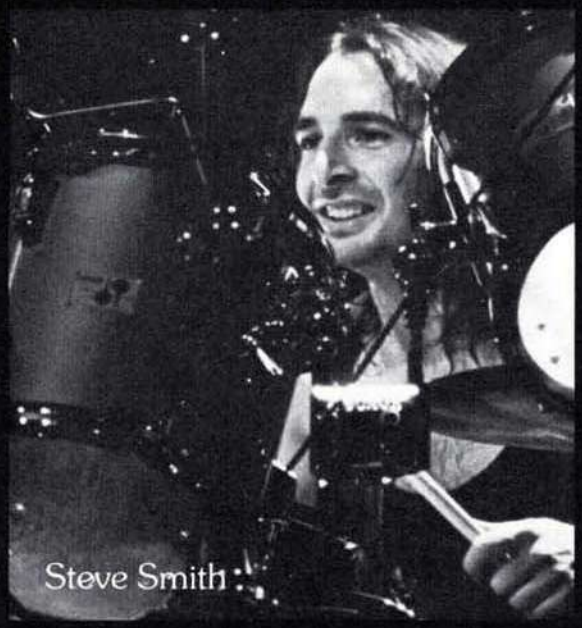
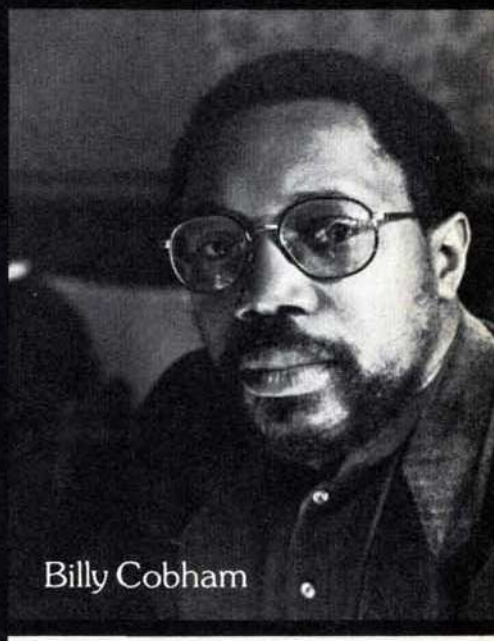
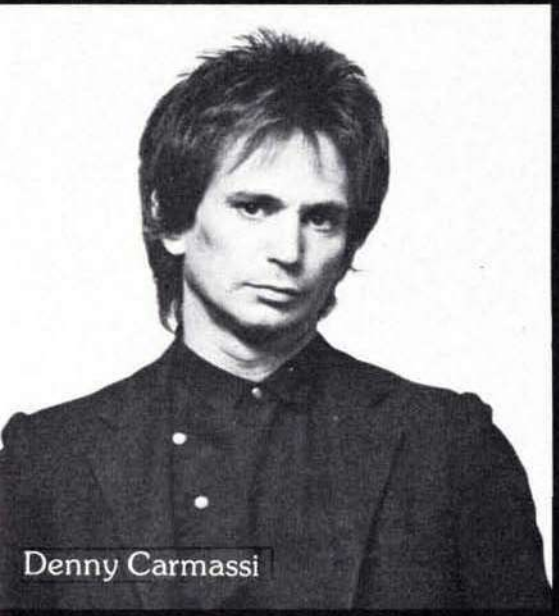


ARTISTRY IN RHYTHM


Harvey Mason

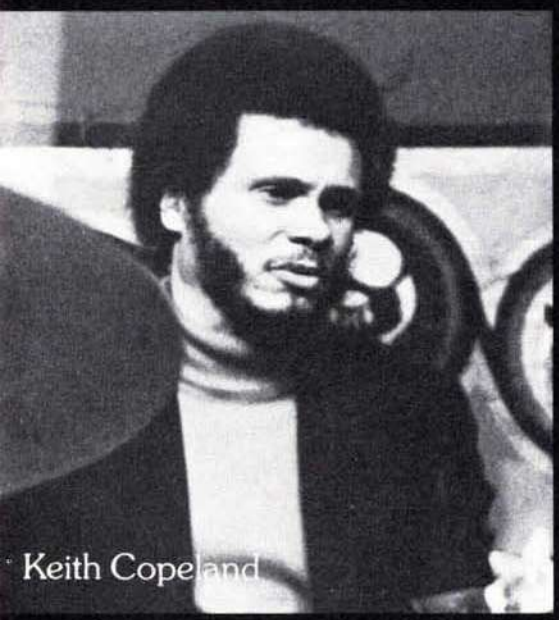

Steve Smith

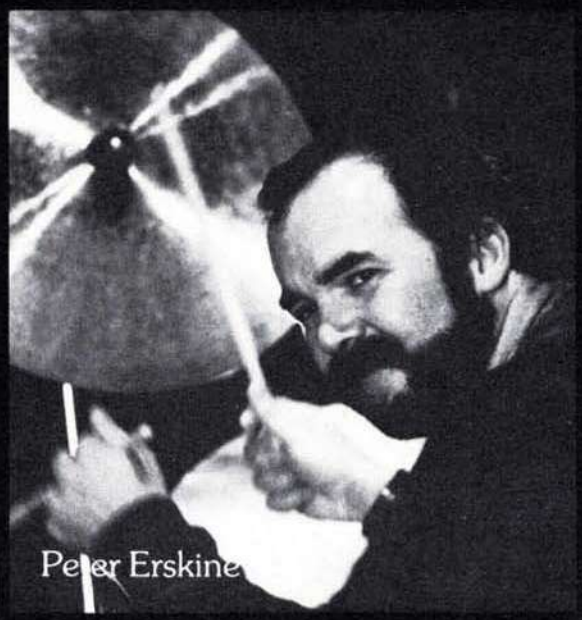

Billy Cobham


Denny Carmassi

"What do these great artists have in common?

Akira Tana


Keith Copeland


Peter Erskine

They all make time with my sticks."

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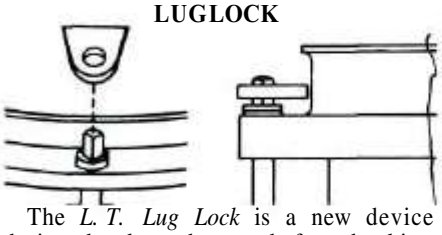
by Bob Saydlowski, Jr.

Accessories

Here we are, at the end of another year already! This Close-Up column takes a look at some accessory products recently released. Naturally, all pieces of equipment cannot be included here, and my apologies are out to those companies missed.

LUGLOCK



The *L. T. Lug Lock* is a new device designed to keep drum rods from backing off under hard playing. *Lug Locks* are made of nylon, rounded at one side, straight at the other. A hole in the *Lug Lock* allows it to fit over the drum rod's head, while the flat side presses against the rim. At the slightest bit of backing off, the flat side turns, engaging a corner against the rim. The gripping action keeps the rod from going any farther. The *Lug Locks* are easily installed, and easily removable—a good alternative to using *Loctite* on the rod threads. (NOTE: *Lug Locks* will not fit Sonor or Premier rod heads.) A set of four retails at $2.00.

BLASTICS

Calato (the *Regal Tip* people) has just introduced *Blasticks*—a cross between a drum stick and brush. The *Blasticks* have a hard, thermo-plastic shaft and approximately thirty rigid nylon bristles at the other end. They give a tighter, loud sound than regular brushes, and feel just like drumsticks. Rim shots are no problem and—even with uncoated heads—the brush-type sound prevails. Not to be confused with brushes, *Blasticks* are a nice little item to carry in your stick bag for that "different" sound. Retail: $9.95/pair.

STA-WAY AND CYM-SET

Corder Drum Company has taken over many of the old Fibes products, and two accessories are surely worth mentioning. The *Sta-\Vay* is a double-ended, hard-rubber bumper which attaches to one of your drum's tension screws. Using the *Sta-Way* allows for protection of the drum finish, since it acts as a spacer between any two closely-set drums (i.e. snare drum and mounted tom). A nice item for keeping your drums unscratched. The *Cym-Set* positioner is a large, round piece of space-age plastic which fits on the cymbal tilter post under the cymbal's cup. It keeps your ride cymbal from moving about excessively, and also cuts down on a few overtones. (I've been using one of the old Fibes models for years!) The *Sta-Way* retails at $3.75; the *Cym-Set* at $4.50.

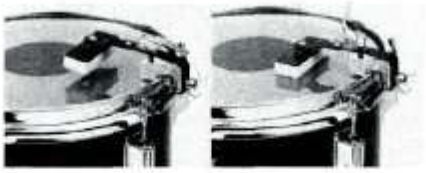
BUZZBUSTER

The classic problem of sympathetic snare vibration is still among us. The strainer throw-off alleviates this quite easily when the drummer is not playing, but what about when he *is* playing?

Buzzbuster has taken one step towards eliminating unwanted vibration. *Buzzbuster* is a leg-operated sprung damper which attaches to the bottom of the snare drum. Two foam pads lie just out of contact with the snare wires, with a padded lever mounted off the side of the drum. By using a sideward leg motion against the lever, the pads dampen the snare wires, cutting off all noisy vibration. When pressure is released, the damper returns to its normal position. *Buzzbuster* does help when playing the tom-toms, but you do have to get some sort of technique down. Just leaving the damper against the wires will not help, as the snares will be choked, thus giving an unnatural sound. So, as you can imagine, a bit of synchronized leg movement is involved here.

Buzzbuster is definitely on the right track. Perhaps they can come up with a second version for permanent dampening, while still keeping a natural snare drum sound. Dealing with what seems to be a solutionless problem, *Buzzbuster* does a good job, even if the motion required to activate it is a bit foreign. The device will fit on all snare drums 5" to 8" deep. Retail: $65.00.

EXTERNAL MUFFLERS

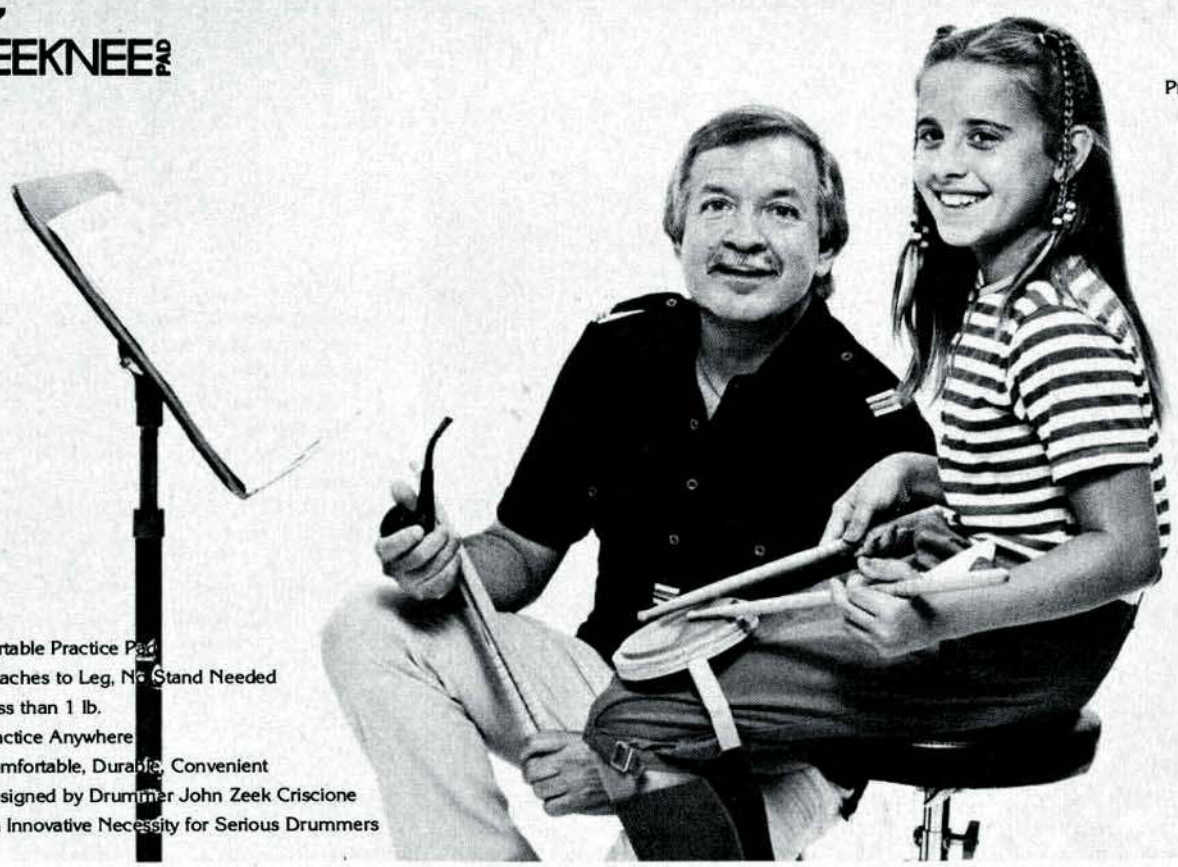


As we all know, Rogers was the first on the scene with an external muffler. Now, adding in their own versions are Sonor, Tama, Yamaha and Pearl. All of them attach to the rim in one fashion or another. Sonor uses a spring steel clip, while the others fasten with a screw, clamping to the hoop. All are adjustable for degree of muffle, and come in various sizes. (Sonor and Yamaha each offer two sizes.) The most convenient, perhaps, is Tama's muffler, which allows quick-release by flipping a hinged lever. External muffling is, technically, the better way to go; the drumhead moves naturally, and unlike internal dampers, externals are rattle-free when not in use. And, externals may be positioned anywhere by the player. Prices vary, with the highest retail at $18.00 (Sonor).

DRUM MUFF

On the other end, Drum Muff is designed to help dampen bass drums—internally. A nine-ounce piece of gray polyfoam fits snugly into the bottom 1/3 of the drum. Rounded at its bottom, and cut into "waves" at its top by a laser-eye band saw, the Drum Muff is effective for drummers who want that tight-muffled sound with no overtones. Personally, I found my double-headed bass drum to be a bit *too* dead with the Drum Muff inside. After cutting off about an inch of its depth, the sound was much more satisfactory, and I'm currently using it in the drum. The Drum Muff has more of a dampening effect than a *Deadringer*—in fact, probably about the same as a thin pillow—but it looks a whole lot better. Retail: $17.00.

ZEEKNEE PAD



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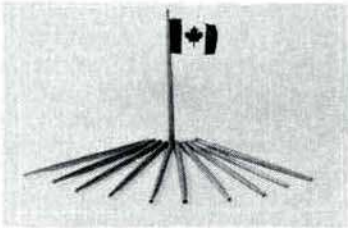

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Photo by Randy Bachman

Dennis

It isn't often that someone is entirely content and satisfied with what he does for a living, but Dennis Elliot of Foreigner is one such person whose accomplishments have surpassed even his goals and imaginings.

"Growing up, I really wanted to play rock music, apart from one instance when I played with a jazz/rock fusion band, If. The Beatles and all that were influences so I just wanted to play regular rock. I didn't really know what my goals were. I thought the best I would achieve would be that I would end up being a regular session musician making a nice living, although I was never crazy about doing sessions. I never thought I'd end up with a band like Foreigner, with virtually some sort of stardom happening. I never dreamed of anything like this."

Since its beginnings in 1977, Foreigner has released four albums, with their most recent, *Foreigner IV,* skyrocketing to the #1 position on the charts. Having had such hits as "Cold as Ice," "Hot Blooded," "Double Vision," "Dirty White Boy" and most recently "Urgent" and "Waiting For A Girl Like You," the band remains one of the most popular touring groups on the scene today. As with any fledgling band, however, they have undergone the ups and downs of public acceptance and mixed reviews.

"When this band started, the only way we learned was by experimenting on stage," Dennis revealed. "We came straight out on the road after the first album, which was a success, and we started out on a two-week tour with the Doobie Brothers. Other bands come out and they start by playing clubs. We came out in 20,000 sealers. Our very first gig as a band was headlining an outdoor festival in Washington D.C. The album took off, and after the Doobie Brothers tour, we ended up headlining for seven months. All we had was that one album to draw songs from. You have to experiment on stage, and that's the only way this band has ever learned. We grew up in the public eye; they watched us grow and watched the mistakes we made. Our mistakes were always public and if you read some of that press, they always slayed us. We got terrible press. I can't believe that, all of a sudden, the reviews are favorable. It was really, 'This band is rubbish, they just make hit records.' Should we feel guilty that we make hit records? People buy them. We don't force them to buy them. When we were brand new, the reviews said, 'This band is going to be big,' but as soon as everyone else started saying it, the original critics went, 'This band is rubbish.' Finally they're saying, 'Okay, they've been around for six years; they must be legitimate. Let's leave them alone.' "

For Dennis Elliot, Foreigner began as a chance meeting at Bobby Colomby's house. He had left England in 1975 with a band headed by lan Hunter, and when the band ended after only a week, Elliot found himself in a strange country working as a mechanic to survive. He barely remembers the fateful night at Colomby's home studio, and laughs, "For some reason, Mick [Jones] liked the way I played. I don't even remember speaking to him. It's strange when people ask how I got into the group because it was just one day the phone rang. It was Mick Jones saying, 'I don't know if you remember me, but we met at Bobby Colomby's house. You wanna come down? We're forming a band.' And that's how it happened. I was just there at the right time."

The invitation came at a time when Dennis had been extremely disillusioned with music, for while working as a mechanic, he had gone to countless auditions, often leaving even before playing. None of the music excited him and the bands left him cold.

"With Foreigner, it was instantaneous. I felt like I had finally found some music worth playing. It was the quality of the music that appealed to me, basically. There were songs with melodies that you could sing along with, and I like playing melodies. I'm not a busy drummer who likes to play in a trio so he can play more than everyone else. At that point, the band didn't even have a name and there were no gigs, but I quit my job to rehearse with them because I had confidence that we could do something."

On more than one occasion, Jones has been cited in various articles saying he was impressed with Elliot's playing *because* it was simplistic and he "left the right holes."

"Yeah, I'm lazy," Dennis responded, with his usual good sense of humor. "Where a lot of drummers would play a fill, I don't. I'll either play straight through or maybe take a beer or something," he laughed. "It's true, I never really exerted myself. I guess that's just the way I play. I don't really like playing a lot of drum fills unless they're necessary. When I do them, I hope they mean something to the song rather than, 'Oh, there's a gap, I'll do a drum fill.' I guess that impressed them, I don't know. I never really asked them, 'What do you mean, I play simply? Is that a compliment or an insult?' I think I've changed a little in that I'm a little more confident now. The band has changed though, through the five years, so my style has changed too. It didn't start out being such a heavy band. I used to even play with

by Robyn Flans

Elliot

the classic style grip when I was with If. I changed because I think you get a little more power and you can hold on a bit tighter. Now I have sticks designed with no varnish and before I go on stage, I dip them in water. When you dip wood into water, the grain pops out and it forms like a brush, with little splinters, which is not really very good for your hands, but the sticks don't slip at all. It's murder on my hands and I've got holes in my fingers.

"For a long time, I couldn't find a stick that was right. It was either too long or too fat or too short, so I made a stick that I liked on my lathe at home and I took it to Cappella Wood. They put it into their automatic lathe and it duplicated the drum stick. It's similar to a *2S* or a *3S,* sort of in-between. It's quite a heavy stick made of hickory. I'm better at making sticks, really, than using them," he joked.

He has been using sticks for quite a while, however, since growing up in a musical family where his dad played piano and saxophone, his brother played trumpet and his mother sang.

"They needed a drummer so they had me born," he laughed. "Actually, I don't remember learning to play. I was about five years old though and I have pictures of me with a big bass drum where I can't even reach the pedals."

For many years, Buddy Rich remained his foremost musical influence, and from ages twelve to fourteen, Dennis had basic formal training. He began playing professionally at sixteen, and it was the jazz/fusion band, If, that became the turning point of his playing career.

"I really had wanted to work with them and thought it would be good for me. Everything was read. Whoever wrote the song would come in with the parts and it was complicated and interesting. From that, a lot of sessions came my way, but I never did like to do sessions because I would get very nervous about what I'd have to play. I didn't really read that well and if you're doing a film score, you have to watch your part, the conductor and the screen and you don't know where to look first. I can do the sorts of things session work requires, but it's like meeting new people—you don't know what they're going to think of you and what kind of style they're going to want. Now if I do a session, the person wants me because of the way I *do* play and I know what's in store."

Photo by Randy Bachman

At the end of the gig with If, and while playing with the Roy Young Band, a Little Richard-type band, Elliot expanded his set-up to include double bass drums.

''At first, I really didn't know what to do with them. It just looked good and I fancied the idea of having the two bass drums. It took a long time to learn how to really use them, but I started off by just rolling off an ending. I never use them instead of the hi-hat, unless it's by mistake," he laughed. "I have the hi-hat clamped to the bass drum and the legs have been cut off. With two bass drums, your hi-hat tends to be too far away, so I cut off the legs and clamped it to the bass drum so it's right next to the other pedal. It saves having to stretch too far. With double bass, you just practice like you would anything else, really. The only thing I found with the double bass drums—say for instance you're playing a regular simple pattern, you change around the way you play. In other words, you start with your left foot rather than your right, because your left foot on the hi-hat is always playing on the beat, so it's natural to start off with the left foot. It's strange at first, but it's one of those things you just have to get used to. When we're recording, we always have the double kit set up, but I rarely use it. Actually, I've only used it on one song, 'Seventeen,' on the *Head Games* album. I did this drum fill which we nicknamed 'the lift shaft' because it's so busy and complicated and fast that it sounds like you've just pushed a drumkit down the lift shaft. We absolutely cracked up over it. If you listen to it, you'll know what I'm saying."

He keeps his set-up sparse and simple, and he maintains, "It doesn't really matter what drums you use when you're playing arenas like we do because you're going through 30 or 40,000 watts of PA. Really, I suppose it more depends on what sort of mic's they use and the EQ they put on the board. I really think the live sound on stage is more of a personal preference. I don't really think the sound of the drums really matter; it's what they do with it. They do so much and we've got to put mic's inside. To me, it's 'What are you talking about? When John Bonham used to record, they

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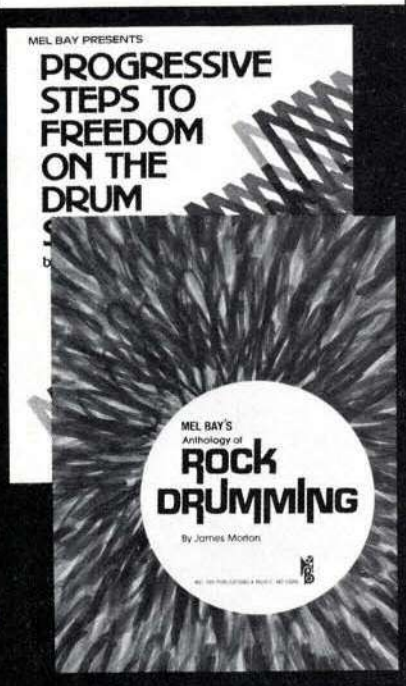

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used to put him in the toilet with two mic's above.' You don't need to get all that technical. I don't do all that dampening of the drums with pillows and stuff. You'd think drummers were going to go in there for a nap or something. But I've got mic's inside the bass drums for the monitors and we've got more power on stage than there is in the audience. We've got 40,000 watts on stage and 35,000 in the audience, so it's quite loud on stage.

"When we're recording, we go for a live sound and there's no dampening, no booth, and I sit right in the middle with them. There's no carpet and even my riser is the same as in concert, which is solid oak. We do very little overdubbing and it's mostly done with the basic band, live, and then they go ahead and add stuff. Obviously, the vocal gets done again. They usually go for a good drum track. If we get a good drum track with no mistakes, maybe the bass player will make a mistake and so we go ahead and re-do the bass, but basically, they work for the drum track. I don't ever do any overdubbing, apart from maybe a roll or something and little things like that. I once tried to overdub something on the *Head Games* album, but I did it so tight with the drum track, you couldn't tell it was double-tracked."

Currently, he uses a custom-made Tama set, about which he says, "I like Tama drums because they're really made well. I like white drums, and although they didn't make a white kit or 26" bass drums, they said they'd make them for me. I've gone up from 24" bass drums to 26" bass drums. I also use a custom-made snare drum which was made for me in Memphis. It's 14 x 8 or 9" and it's a 15-ply shell. I used to use a metal Ludwig snare, but this one is terrific. I also have another custom-made drum which I used on the last tour which has got two snare strainers. One carries gut snares and one carries wire, so you've got the choice of two different sounds or a blend of both. It's a very interesting drum. That was made for me in New York. It's really best for a quieter band, though, or a jazz band, and in the studio, it's excellent.

"With the double kit, I just use one tom in-between because the bass drums are so big and high that it puts the rack toms too high for me. So I use the smallest one in the middle, which is 15" which is actually quite a big 'small' drum. And then there's a 16" and an 18".

"All the cymbals are Paiste. The ride cymbal is a 22" and I have two to choose from, one of which is this new cymbal called a *Rude,* which is an unfinished cymbal which they don't put on the lathe. It looks like it's copper and hammered, and it's very, very loud and excellent for rock 'n'roll."

To Dennis, a good rock drummer is someone like John Bonham. "I never really appreciated Bonham until very recently when I began to really listen to their tapes. A good rock drummer is able to play loud and is a fine drummer. I like to play with power and I think the drums sound better when they're played with power. It's power, taste and ability. I've got the ability from my background to virtually play anything I think. I don't even remember learning to play drums. It's just something I've always done. Doesn't everyone play drums? So drums are just like an extension of me. Whatever I want to play, I can usually play it.

"I prefer playing on stage than in the studio, though. In the studio, I tend to hold back a little bit. On stage, if you make a mistake, it's gone and it's not on tape. In the studio, if you keep goofing up, it's going to get boring in the end. In sessions, especially if you're playing with a brass section, they'll get peeved at you if you make a mistake. I'm allowed total creativity with Foreigner, though, and if I come up with an idea, they love it. If not, they'll help me out. Sometimes, I need it because when someone writes a song, they've got it in their head what they want from that song, but I might even hear it in double-time. Usually, though, it's whatever I can come up with. During rehearsal period, we just have to wrack our brains to think about what we can do to make this any different or special. Apart from the actual playing though, I'm really not that involved in the recording end of it. I'm usually done in about ten days and they're still working for many more months. I don't really want to be any more involved than I am, though. It's strange. Some drummers do want to get involved like that, but I'm not really technically minded. I go down to see how they're doing about twice a week, but I find the studio quite boring, to be truthful."

With such constant touring, though, how does Dennis keep the same show fresh and exciting every night?

"By doing different things, I suppose," he replied. "That's what I do. I play some crazy things; different drum fills every night. Sometimes they work where I say, 'Hey, that's good,' and I use it again, although there are always certain parts where I'm locked into playing certain things, which I'll do every night because it's part of the track. We do change the set around occasionally and we do have substitute songs that we can put in for a change. If there's freedom to change, that's the only way to really keep it fresh. If you're locked into the same thing every night, it can get boring. Some nights I feel like I'm afraid to take my hands off the rhythm. Maybe the monitors aren't just right and I can't hear someone, so nights like that, I tend to hold back. But when a show is happening, which it normally is, I just play anything I want to. Sometimes I just crack up at the things I play, like old corny drum fills, but it keeps it fresh and it makes the guys laugh. This is a serious business and a serious band with a number one album, and you'd think there would be a big ego

trip, but I'm not into that and neither is anyone else in the band. We throw this little corny stuff in and we'll have a laugh, and if you can get someone to laugh, you'll play better. If he turns around with a look like, 'What are you doing?' it's so rigid and uptight."

Since most of Foreigner's tunes are high-powered rock, it isn't always easy to withstand the physical demands.

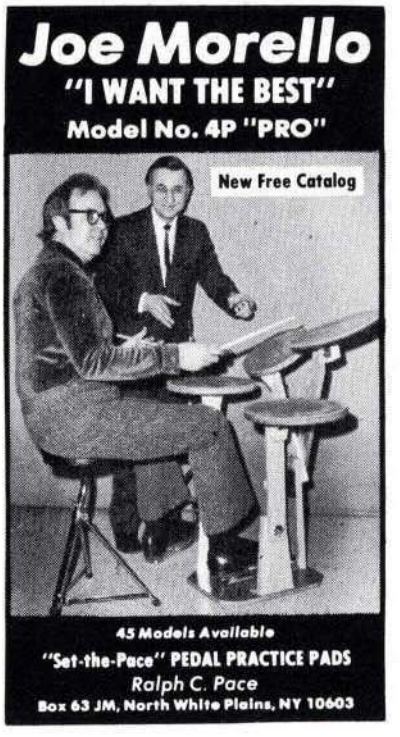
"It's a pretty energetic show and there's no way to really pace yourself, except the more you play, the more in shape you get and the easier it becomes. I have oxygen on stage and sometimes I actually have to use it because I get faint. It really depends on the show. Between the heat of the lights and the dampness in the theatre, I feel sorry for the kids sometimes because they're as wet as I am. In addition to the oxygen, I have beer on stage because I get so thirsty. After just one song, I'm dehydrated. I used to drink *Gatorade,* and that was very good, but I have a little stage-fright and the beer relaxes me. Before the show I like to get changed early so I can sit down and hold the drumsticks and dip them in water so I can get used to them. Then I start pacing. I don't know why I get so nervous. I'm not really afraid of messing up on stage, because if I do, I usually just laugh. I mean, sometimes I'll throw the sticks up in the the air and I never catch them and I always embarrass myself like that, so I don't really know why I get so worried. But sometimes when the lights go out, I hyperventilate and if there's no air in the room, I make myself faint by doing that. If that happens, I take a few deep breaths of the oxygen. There's really only one ballad in the set, so sometimes I don't even have time to pick up my beer or even wipe my hands. But it's like an athlete really. You get used to it and you breathe a bit better. Some people don't know how to breathe. If we're going to play 'Seventeen,' for instance, which is a very high-powered song, I pace that, so before the 'lift shaft' drum fill, I'll take a deep breath and maybe take it a little easier, if it's possible. I sat in with a band who was playing some of our songs in a club. I broke the drummer's sticks counting the song in, and I just felt terrible. I asked if I could write him a check and told him how sorry I was. A cymbal cracked, there were dents all over the place and the drum even started moving. I guess I'm used to playing heavy, and my kit is built to take it.

"When we tour, we tour with a vengeance, though. My typical day is that I get up real late, and that helps, because if you get up early, by the time showtime comes, the day is over and you just want to go have a meal, not play a rock 'n' roll show. So I usually sleep until about 12:00 and I find that by showtime, I'm in the mid-day hours. I really don't do anything to keep in shape on the road, though."

At home, between tours, however, Dennis does try to keep in shape by working out in the gym in his basement. During a recent break, however, he was hitting the punching bag so hard that he actually broke a tendon in his wrist only three weeks before touring was to resume.

"And then there was one period of time that I even played with a broken hand," Dennis recalled. "I had an argument with someone and I walked out of the room, and being of my temperament, I slammed my hand into a door and there was a metal plate on it. That was in Kansas City and we had a show the next night, so they put me in one of those casts you can take off. The next night, before the show, they took me to the hospital, took the cast off and injected me with Novocain. I played and didn't feel much until halfway through the set when the stuff started to wear off. It became more and more painful and I nearly fainted. The next night I left the cast on and taped the stick to the cast. It must have looked ridiculous, but I got really good with my left hand during that period because it was like that for a couple of weeks. We even got another drummer to help me. But I got very good with the two bass drums and the left hand and even now, I can play well with my left hand, so I suppose it was a good period for learning. But boy was it painful."

But even with all the extensive touring, Dennis Elliot is content. "It's an awful lot of travelling, but the way everything is set up now, it's so professional you don't even know you're travelling, really. Before this band, I always felt, 'I'll do my job, playing drums, going to the session, get what gigs I can and hopefully continue playing drums.' This is super with Foreigner and I'm really enjoying it!"



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Erskine *continuedfrom page 12*
played claves or something, just jamming along with the machine. And that first take was what we used on the album.

First of all, I think they are a fantastic tool for a writer, because he can get an idea of what a tune will sound like in the privacy of his own home. With a synthesizer, a drum machine and one of those little multi-track tape recorders, a composer can, in about an hour's time, get a tune in pretty good rough shape. I'm using the Oberheim DMX for that very purpose. I'm starting to compose more and more, so I can get a studio-quality drum sound along with the shythesizer and get a good working tape with which to do further exploration or work.

I don't think there's any real valid argument that drum machines are going to put drummers out of business, any more than synthesizers have put other musicians out of work. People who are using them in the studios are hiring drummers to program the machines. Drum machines are used because they are their own unique instrument. Some people like the sound of them and they like the process of creating the drum part in this multi-track sense from the ground up. And after they get it the way they want it, it's consistent—it's always there.

RM: How did the other members of Weather Report feel about playing along with a machine?

PE: They liked it. It was a different groove, and for that particular tune it worked well. The band was used to working with sequencers, and in essence, that's what a drum computer is. It's a very sophisticated sequencer with real drum sounds, digitally stored.

I like to think about the potential for using it live. It can serve as an accompaniment to my playing, or I can trigger it with some kind of trigger system. For example, with my little 18" bass drum, I might trigger the bass drum sound that's in the machine. All of a sudden, in the middle of a show, I could have this fat, studio-sound bass drum, instead of just having this one jazz sound. It might permit more sound possibilities live as well as in the recorded context. Right now, I'm working with Oberheim to improve the sounds they have.

On the one hand, I'm intrigued with that stuff; I like electronics and I'm very fascinated by the electronic age. On the other hand, like when I went down to the NAMM show last summer, I thought I would be excited by all the electronic toys. But it was just the opposite. What was turning me on were the drums at the Yamaha booth, Gary Gauger's RIMS system, and the pre-tuned stuff that Remo had. *That* is what got me really excited: acoustical instruments pushing air. When you really get down to it, there's no substitute for the sound of an instrument moving air to a pair of ears. That's what music is really about. The capabilities of computers hold a lot of promise, but I'd still rather hear Elvin hit a drum than hear anybody push a button.

RM: One of the main complaints about the machines is that they're *too* perfect.

PE: Yeah, well you can get around that. The machines do permit the human element to be in there if you know how to program it. Otherwise, if you rely on the automatic clock mechanism, it's going to auto/correct to the nearest 16th or whatever. So with patience, you can create something that's close to human. Computers can do certain functions that a human could never do, but yet, the subtleties of human thought are just too complex to program into a computer. The mistake people make is expecting the drum machine to be like a drummer. It's not. It's just a machine that records rhythmic patterns. I think the idea of a computer drum machine is great though. In my little apartment, I can put a drum track down so I can hear what a tune is going to sound like. And I'm certainly not putting any drummers out of work. It's just much easier for me to get the stuff together on tape. And it's fun! I've come up with some different beats using the Oberheim. It's a different way of approaching rhythms.

When I was in Weather Report, Joe and I had this scheme worked out where we were each going to have an Oberheim drum machine. Then by means of cassette interface, we were going to send ideas to each other on cassette, play them back on our own machine, and see what the other one had come up with. That was going to be our long-distance way of rehearsing new stuff when I was in New York.

RM: Let's move from drum machines to the real thing. You've been using Yamaha for the last couple of years.

PE: Going to Japan on several occasions gave me the opportunity to play Yamaha, and I was perfectly delighted with them. The craftsmanship on the shells is about as good as you could ask for. They keep their round and the heads sit perfectly on the shells; there are no funny bumps where there shouldn't be. I don't know exactly what the physics are; all I know is that they sound really good. A lot of people have commented on the warmth they hear from my drums.

The hardware is tremendously designed. Their lighter weight hardware is more than adequate for my needs. Also, it's easier to haul around and work with on the bandstand. And nothing has ever gone wrong with any of my Yamaha hardware yet.

RM: I think a lot of people are somewhat suspicious of endorsements nowadays. A lot of drummers jump around from company to company, and people start to wonder if the artist really cares about the instrument, or if it's just another business deal.

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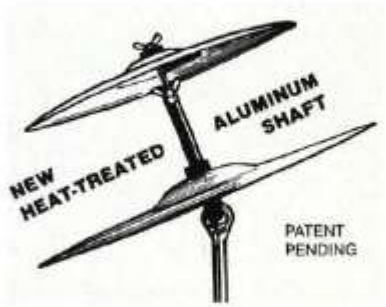

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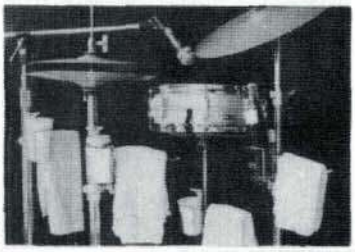

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PE: The drum companies have been pretty generous with a great number of artists. As a practical business thing for the companies, it gets their instruments out there where they're seen by a lot of people. And in its best role, the artist is providing a very good service for the drum company by providing invaluable feedback about the instrument. The endorsees will be the first to get hold of a new thing, so they can give the feedback of "This is good; this is not so good." So the endorsement thing makes good sense for the companies. They're giving away a lot, but I think they're getting it back.

It's a gamble. I think some of us make better endorsers than others. Some guys endorse something and then turn around and hock what they've been given. Or then there was this drummer who was with one of the large drum companies. He became a great embarassment because he turned up in one of the so-called "men's magazines," and he was talking about all sorts of distasteful stuff. The whole endorsement idea is aimed at the young market; it's to get the kids to buy the big drumsets. And here's someone who totally abused the responsibility he was supposed to have with that. It showed a total lack of sensitivity to his role of being a role model for young people, which is what you are when you endorse something.

And then there's a lot of jumping around in the endorsement thing. If anyone cares to look through the past few years *of Modern Drummer,* they'll see a lot of the same faces appearing behind a lot of different drums. Everyone has their reasons. Maybe they're searching for the instrument they have the best rapport with. But I think the way some of the guys jumped around all over the place made their endorsement mean less.

I thought very seriously before I changed my endorsement because I was very conscious of that. But I just finally felt that I had to follow my integrity in terms of the instrument I wanted to play, and Yamaha drums seemed to come closer to the ideal of what I wanted to play on. So I kind of feel like a company man. They've been generous enough to let me use an instrument that's really terrific. I hope they feel that I provide a service for them in return, in terms of promoting their product, speaking well about it, and giving feedback to them.

The Zildjians have also been tremendously generous and helpful. I have a set of cymbals now that are totally incredible: 14" *New Beat* hi-hats, an 18" flat ride, a 17" crash, a 16" swish, a 10" splash, and a 20"K. ride—one of the new K.'s made in Boston.

A few years ago, I endorsed a couple of things in the electronic percussion realm that I don't really use any more. For a second, I thought I was getting carried away and putting my name on too many things. Sure, it doesn't hurt, and I got a lot of exposure. Somehow, Maynard's band really attracted a lot of endorsement opportunities. It's very flattering when you're young in the business and all of a sudden you're getting your picture all over the place. But eventually, I was getting tired of seeing all those ads, so I put somewhat of a moratorium on it for a while. Now I just stick to the basics: Yamaha drums, Zildjian cymbals, Remo heads and Vic Firth sticks.

RM: Over the years, your drums and cymbals have gotten smaller.

PE: My touch has lightened up. I'm playing a lighter drum head, using lighter sticks, playing smaller cymbals and smaller drums. I like the tone quality I'm getting now. I feel like I'm just discovering how to hit a drum. When I was with Kenton's band, I used to always break cymbals. I don't think I was hitting them right. But now I don't break them. I don't break drumheads like I used to, or sticks. I'm lightening up my playing; getting a nice sound. I used to beat the sound into the instrument more than get it out. It's just understanding what the instrument is supposed to sound like. It's funny—a lot of the stuff my teacher, George Gaber, told me ten years ago is just starting to register. Sometimes I think, "Geeze, I wish I'd known what he was talking about back then." But you can't. You just have to trust that as you get older, you'll put one and one together and figure out what they were talking about all along.

I don't mind playing larger drums, but that "big drumset" thing, to me, is kind of outdated. At the NAMM show, I saw these huge drumsets, which may appeal to a certain market, but there's nothing in that for me. The stuff seems overblown, and I've played some pretty big drumsets in my time. Some guys do use them very well. Steve Smith has a big double-bass set, and he sounds great. But for me, personally, I feel kind of intimidated when I get behind a big set of drums. I'm not inspired to start hitting them. I really like the small sets. Over at the Gretsch exhibit, they had a ton of big drumsets, but they had one little jazz set—18" bass, 12 and 14" tom-toms—and that was great. *Those* are the drums, right there. I love my Yamaha drums, and I'm a company man when it comes to those matters, but someday I'm going to get myself a little Gretsch jazz drumset. I think every jazz drummer should have one. Have it sitting over by the fireplace and on those inspired evenings play a couple of Tony Williams licks.

One thing I was very distressed to see at the show—a lot of companies are drilling big holes in their drums. I don't understand these "cutaway" drums. I guess it's a gimmick to get people to buy drums. I don't want to sell the r&d technology short, but I don't really think that's what a drum is all about. It was a little distressing

continued on next page

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to me to see drums that were missing half of their thing. All these drums butchered—that turned me off.

RM: When you were with Kenton, didn't you use single-headed drums?

PE: Yeah. I went to single head because they had more of that dry, "chunky" rock sound. When I was in college, that was kind of the sound I had in my head, and it worked okay with Kenton, but it was really *too* dry. Finally, I went to a two-headed drum with a coated *Ambassador* on top and a clear one on the bottom, and I was very pleased when I did that. As you grow, you go through different stages of influence, and for some reason I got into the one-head thing for a while. I don't like the sound of a one-headed drum anymore. I associate it with that kind of "studio" sound. Single-head drums do have a certain unique sound, but I, myself, don't like that sound.

Then you have your single-head drums that come in fantastic shapes. Maybe for certain rock 'n' roll type things those drums are cool, but they're certainly not practical. They're too big to take on gigs. When you're a young, working drummer, you've got to work a lot of gigs. I worked a lot of dances, weddings, conventions, shows, and that kind of stuff. That's a pretty limited design for a drumset from a practical viewpoint.

You have companies like Yamaha, who's making a quality drum, and I think some of the other companies are trying to make good, honest drums. That's what the industry needs and should be doing. For the American drum makers, Drum Workshop is where I see hope. I'm only mentioning it because the quality of the drums really impressed me. I think the rest of the American drum companies will catch on and realize that they simply have to make a good, quality drum. No amount of holes they drill is going to make the drum any better. It's the quality of the wood and the roundness of the shell that matters. Take the hoop off and set the shell down on a glass table and see how it sits. If that drum sits perfectly flat, you know that a head has a fighting chance of sounding good on it. If it doesn't sit flat, well "caveat emptor." So look at how well the shell is made. That's what it comes down to. All the space-age materials and geometric shapes and holes drilled into the shell don't amount to anything without that basic quality being there. That's a very old-fashioned sounding kind of thing to say, but as I get older, I realize that's what drum-making should be about. I hope the American drum companies are going to start realizing this. The quality control in the American drums got a little shaky, and that's why the Japanese drums did so well. It just comes down to an instrument that sounds good and functions well. These gimmick things . . .

And the hardware—hopefully the "bigger is better" idea is being downplayed. I don't know what happened. They were making cymbal stands that wouldn't even fit into a trap case. So what good does that do anybody? Except the endorsees who get all that shit free, and they have big, special cases for that stuff.

RM: And big roadies to carry it for them.

PE: Even the big roadies don't like that stuff. I wonder what ever happened to the little flush-base cymbal stands. I hope they still make them. I always loved those little Ludwig and Slingerland flat-base stands. When I joined Kenton, that's what I had, and I was using huge cymbals. Like I said, my Yamaha hardware is not that big, but I can get the cymbal stands as high as I need them—and I get them up there—and the stuff is sturdy. It just takes good design.

RM: A lot of people feel that loud music calls for big drums. Weather Report was loud, but you were using an 18" bass drum.

PE: At first, I had a 22" bass drum, with a hole in the front head and a little bit of padding. I got a good dry sound, it was easy for the sound man, and it worked well. But then I switched to an 18", and had it tuned up fairly tight. I remember the first rehearsal after I did that, we went through a tune and Wayne turned around, smiling, and said, "Definition! All *right]* Definition!'' There was this tone; the drum was speaking. If your drums have tone, they will cut through. If you're playing with a loud group, it generally means that the drums will be miked. A long time ago, Steve Gadd said in an article, "It's easier to get a good sound out of a small drum tuned looser than a large drum tightened up too much." Steve can get an amazingly huge drum sound, and his drums are not that big or that deep. So you don't need big drums. I mean, I like a beefy floor tom sometimes, and there's nothing that sounds like an 18" floor tom. But an 18" floor tom fills a pretty unique need, I think. If someone wants a set for a variety of things, they don't need drums that big. I currently use a 14" floor tom.

RM: When you first joined Weather Report, the group worked as a quartet for a while, and then Robert Thomas, Jr. joined on percussion. For you, what was the difference?

PE: Bobby made it a lot easier when he joined. The rhythm section before I joined was Alex [Acuna] and Manolo [Badrena], which I thought was the greatest. The album *Heavy Weather* came out, and I thought, "Wow! *Thish* Weather Report. This is outasight!" By the time I joined, I think Zawinul wanted a little more clarity and not quite so much of a Latin angle on the thing. For a while, Joe grew kind of disaffected with all the shakers and things, so he opted for the quartet setting. Immediately, there was a lot more focus on the rest of the band. The drums provided a clearer pulse so that Joe, Wayne and Jaco could explore playing a little differently. When Bobby came on, we had explored

the quartet framework about as far as we were going to get. Bobby relieved me from having to go for a lot of different colors or filling in. I had started to branch out and do a little percussion. I had a little African balifon, some *Synares,* some tuned cowbells, and some gongs and stuff.

I was overplaying for a while with the group. I thought I always had to be filling in because Joe wanted to hear a lot of different things. He wanted to hear this beat going, but at the same time, he wanted to hear this other thing. It caused me to overplay for a while, because I was so worried about trying to do all these things I thought he wanted. Rhythmically, the key to Weather Report, I think, is that there's like two different time things going on. There's this one beat that's really propulsive and chugging ahead, and then the backbeat is like in half time. So we'd have this jazz thing with the cymbal, moving ahead, while the snare drum and bass drum were playing a half-time rock thing. It was a nice blend of contrasting rhythm things. It moves a certain way. When Bobby came in, it kind of enabled us to get closer to that idea. Bobby is a unique percussionist. He plays congas, bongos and cymbals all with his hands, so it is a different touch.

RM: One of the many unique things about that group was the fact that Jaco didn't function like a normal bass player.

PE: Yeah, he'd be all over the place. It was Jaco who heard me and got me into the group, more or less. I guess he heard something in my backbeat that he felt was strong enough so he would not have to do strict, traditional bass playing. Jaco sometimes played the bass like a guitar, or he would start playing melodies. I'm working with Jaco now in his Word of Mouth group, and it's just bass, drums, percussionist, and two horns. The interesting thing is the openess of sound when the bass is not playing pure bass things. Somehow it reminds me of modern dance—the way the stuff moves around. It is different. Some drummers probably wouldn't enjoy playing with that kind of thing. They like more traditional bass playing, which I love too, but playing with Jaco has always been a treat for me. The thing with Jaco is, you can't get excited and just start thrashing around the drumset when he's doing something. See, anything in music needs a reference point. Weather Report stuff was getting out harmonically, and melodically it could be really strange, but there was a strong rhythmic reference point underneath—a cooking funk rhythm or something. If the stuff is getting spacy, there has to be some kind of reference point somewhere or else it's like chaos. Certain free music is okay with chaos, but the best free music, if you really listen to it, has some very structured things to it. Any good free art—whether it be paintings,

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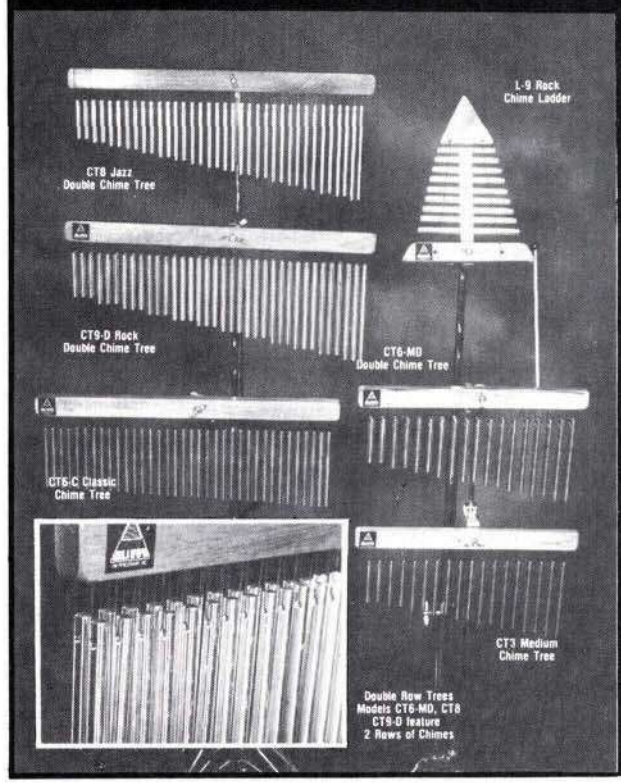

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music or architecture—has a very strong sense of structure hidden somewhere in there. So that's the thing. If you're playing with a real creative musician, each of you, at certain points, has got to be respecting that sense of structure and keeping a basic reference point. Not only for the listeners, but for the musicians as well. Otherwise, you're just rambling up there.

What I learned from Weather Report was not to get "miscellaneous" on the drums. One night, when I first joined the band, I got a little carried away. I was just filling in all over the place, much in the style of some drummers I used to listen to who were popular a few years ago. Joe and Jaco said, "If you ever play that way again, we'll kill you!" [laughs] They wanted me to always be composing, to be rhythmically creative, to never play unimaginatively, but not to play miscellaneously. It had to be clear, it had to be solid and strong—in other words, it had to be supportive. It's like the thing Zawinul said years ago about Weather Report: "We always solo and we never solo." And that's the way the drums had to be: always creative but never just bashing all over the place, or taking up too much musical space.

RM: Why did you leave?

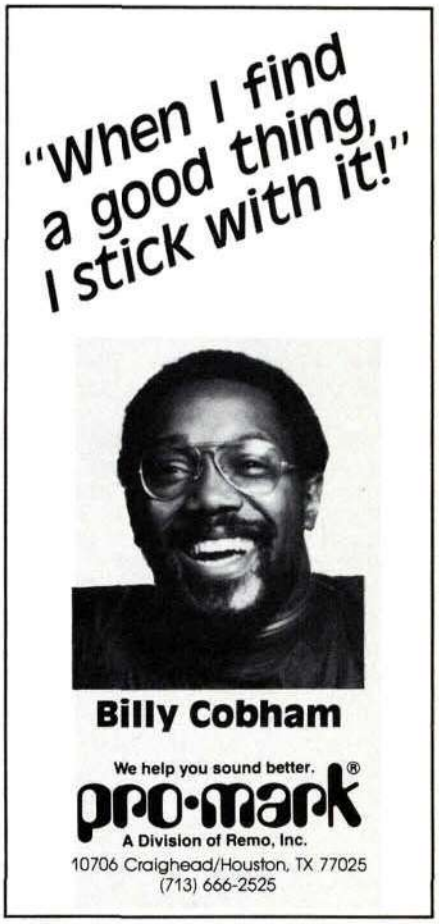
PE: I just thought it was time. I was in the group almost four years, and I wanted to come to New York and be a jazz musician and start exploring musical things a little bit more on my own. There are no burnt bridges or anything. I'll say this: I learned the most I've ever learned about music and about life from working with that group—especially Joe Zawinul. I'm real happy that we finished that last record and got it out, because I think it shows really well how the band was playing and what point we'd reached conceptually. To me, Weather Report is a band about change, so it was time for something new, for them and for me. That's the fun. Weather Report is a musicians' band and people are always eager to see what they're going to do next. And you know it's always going to be good. So I look forward to seeing what they're going to come up with.

RM: Most young players, I think, dream of someday getting to play with "legendary" musicians. You were relatively young when you joined Weather Report. Were you ever awed by the fact that you were in a band with people like Joe Zawinul and Wayne Shorter?

PE: Sometimes it would strike me at odd times, like, "Wow, here I am shopping for post cards with *Wayne Shorter!"* But when you're actually playing, you just feel like one of the boys up there. You're right in the middle of it and you're doing it and it's great. There are times when you do sort of get outside yourself when you're playing. Things can get to the point where nothing can go wrong. You're not being self-conscious about your playing; you are, more or less, outside of yourself—kind of like you're out in the audience listening. Your ears are totally open to everything. You hear everything that is happening because you are not worried about how you sound. And that moment is not something you can interrupt by thinking, "Geeze, here I am playing with *these guysl"* You feel incredible happiness that it sounds that good and that you're there doing it, but it's more of a Zen kind of thing.

RM: So, ideally, you concentrate on the music itself, rather than on what you are playing?

PE: It's like you know something so completely that you don't have to worry about technique or anything. There's nothing between the brain and the reflexes—the source of the action and the actual physical completion of the action. If you're listening to yourself, and you're auditing everything you're playing, you get these microsecond delays. Your time will start getting funny and creatively you choke up, instead of it all being very open. It's like if you see another drummer walk into the club and you start worrying about how he thinks you sound, then you don't sound as good. If you don't know that anyone's there, you sound great. When you're relaxed and you are just listening to everything, you have less barriers. Your senses are totally re-



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sponding to everything. It's an egoless kind of thing, and that's when you sound the best. That's when you kill 'em! That's when you *get down,* really *bad.*

RM: It can be stimulating for a musician to play with a lot of different people, indifferent situations. It can also be stimulating when certain musicians stay together year after year and grow together. Weather Report seemed to combine those two ideas: the group has been together for a long time, but they also take breaks during which the individual members can pursue other projects.

PE: Joe Zawinul encouraged me to play with a lot of other musicians, and play outside the group. I think it's good to play around with a lot of different things, and to hear something new and try to play it. The ability to play all kinds of music is great, but after a while, to satisfy your own sense of musical maturity, you have to build on something. You have to get your own sound together; your own tradition, of sorts; your own playing style.

I'd had visions of staying with Weather Report for years. I like the association of certain musicians that has gone on for years. I respect it, and I think it's very important because this age right now seems very transitory. People don't stick with anything—couples don't stick together, people get divorced like crazy; bands don't really stick together, there are always different groupings of musicians, and they work for a little while and then don't. To see some musicians have real commitments to each other—it's not just heartwarming, it's an inspiring kind of thing to see. I think it produces good musical results. Joe and Wayne, for example, are real partners, in the creative sense of the word. Weather Report, in that sense, wasn't a cooperative band. We were hired to play with them. But Steps is a cooperative group. We share. We make it or break it together. Really feeling a part of the musical, creative and financial success of something is an important incentive for a band to stick together.

It was great being in Weather Report. And yet, to leave the relative security of that to try and do something on my own seemed natural. To me, it didn't seem like any big deal. But it did, I guess, answer a need in me to find a little more of my own niche, evolving more towards the kind of player I want to be. My coming to New York was, in part, a desire to work with certain musicians—like the guys in Steps—and to find the musicians who I would like to explore music with for years to come. I feel that with Steps, I'm getting to play a lot of music that, for the first time, really sounds like me. It's a little closer to what I want to sound like and be perceived as, as a drummer.

RM: Wasn't Steps originally put together for Japan?

PE: Yeah. Originally, Steve Gadd was the drummer. Luckily, I got involved with the group at a certain point. For a while, it was just kind of a get-together thing where we had a good market in Japan and we would play in New York City. But then it got to the point of, "What are we going to do with our futures? Are we going to get serious or what? We have to know." We decided that we all liked the band enough to" make a commitment to it, so that Steps would be our first priority. If a Steps tour comes up, everything else has to be scheduled around that. That contributed to my ultimate decision to leave Weather Report. I'd made touring commitments with Steps for the summer, and after that, Weather Report decided to do a summer tour. You can't be in too many bands at once.

Steps has all the people who I love to play with. I think Michael Brecker is *the* musician of the '80s. His playing amazes me more every time I hear him. Mike Mainieri—I've been a fan of his since I was young. He's got the four-mallet thing totally together, but it's coming from a more soulful thing than a lot of four-mallet players. A lot of vibes players are into a more cerebral type thing; Mike *gets down!* And I'm getting an amazing experience playing with Eddie Gomez. I couldn't ask for anything more. Eddie has been the best thing to happen to me in terms of my time function. And Don Grolnick is a great piano player and composer. I'm learning a lot from him about different types of music.

The whole group is learning from each other. We have a lot of new music and we're still working on it, but there's a certain identity of sound already there. Our goal is to play the best improvisational music we can, whether it be in a Police-like rhythmic framework or it's bebop. The idea is that the songs be good compositions, and the compositions allow improvising. And there should be a certain spirit—there's just a certain jazz spirit or attitude we all have—that colors the sound. We're not trying to make something that will sell; we're just going to do it If by its own virtue it sells, I think that's the only way to do it.

RM: You recently did your first album under your own name for Contemporary Records. Were you happy with the way it came out?

PE: I am tremendously pleased with it. We did it in two days, and recorded everything, except for one tune, direct to two track, so the audio quality and fidelity is outstanding. It's a live session—no overdubs—and everything was first or second takes, so the album is very fresh sounding. We did one tune multi-track where I overdubbed percussion and played a little bit of Oberheim synthesizer. And then in addition to the ensemble tunes, there is one little drum solo I played on there, just as a little signature.

The drum sound we got is reminiscent of 1960s Blue Note jazz albums. It's not that

real upfront kind of drum sound, but the blend is real good and you can hear everything real well. David Baker was the engineer and he did a very good job. I'm very happy with the balance and the texture of the sound.

I really couldn't be too much more pleased with it as a first representation under my own name. John Koenig, the producer, gave me the freedom to pick the material, the musicians and the concept of the album. I think it's the best playing I've done on record, and I'm also happy to have been able to present the other players in that kind of a setting. And I really loved getting to play with Don Alias on this album. He plays on every tune and he made everything completely smoking. Playing with him is a 100% treat. We play very well together.

RM: Did the two of you have to work things out in advance so you wouldn't get in each other's way?

PE: No, we didn't plan a thing. We are able to fall naturally into all sorts of different directions. Another amazing percussionist, who I've only played with a couple of nights, is Alex,Acuna. You can put him on any instrument and he is a complete groove to play with. There are many great conga players around, but the guys who have excited me the most—Don and Alex—are both, interestingly enough, also drumset players.

RM: Have you ever done anything with them using two drumsets?

PE: No, but that would be interesting. When you're playing with musicians like those guys, they're so good you could be playing any instrument. Alex or Don could pick up a soda bottle and make it sound great. I've seen Zawinul do that. He could pick up the dumbest little toy instrument and make incredible music with it.

RM: I've seen Airto play a groove on a pack of cigarettes.

PE: Oh yeah, Airto is the king of that kind of stuff. That's what real music making is about: being able to make great music and create joy with anything. Just by clapping your hands and singing—that's the purest form. Then you start slapping your hands against something—bongos or whatever—and you're talking about some music.

RM: You wrote three of the tunes on the album. Was that your first experience with composing?

PE: I wrote some stuff in high school and college for theory class. I always opted to take composition classes because composing is very important. I hear a lot of music inside me but it's hard to get it out. When you begin composing, like I am now, you get a lot of vignettes—little portions that sound neat—but to expand on that you need more compositional technique. I'm going to have to start studying seriously. I usually set up a rhythm on my drum machine and then start improvising on the synthesizer. I don't have great keyboard facility or compositional technique, but improvising always brings out something original and creative. That gives me the germ for a new tune.

I can see why when songwriters write one tune they want to write more. It's intoxicating to hear your music played. The first time Steps played my "Coyote Blues," people told me, "You looked like the father of a newborn baby." Just hearing it was such a kick. Of course, with musicians like that, you don't have to write too much and they bring it to life. They bring the humble little notes you have on paper to sounding like some real music.

So I recommend to all drummers to study keyboard. Even if piano lessons aren't fun, don't give it up. Take keyboard, learn theory, learn harmony, and compose. Don't just dip your toes in the water—jump in and start doing it.

RM: A lot of drummers can't compose because they don't know enough about music.

PE: You've got the same responsibility to know as much about the music as any other musician. I mean, drums are initially easier to play than a violin or clarinet. You just walk up and hit a drum and it makes a sound. With a clarinet, it can take a week just to get a squeak. But after a point, the artistic demand is equally as high on all instruments. Even to get a perfect sound out of a triangle takes true artistry. The percussionists in the New York Philharmonic are as great musicians as anyone else in that orchestra. And I couldn't conceive of thinking of Elvin Jones in terms any less than Coltrane.

A drummer has to know music and song forms and so on. When you're playing with a band and they say "Take it," you've got to be able to play on the tune form—whether it's a 12-bar blues, a standard, or whatever—and play a musical solo. If you know the melody and harmony, that will all come out in your drumming. When people say that someone is a "musical drummer," it's because the drummer plays with harmonic and melodic sense. Max Roach is a great example of someone who plays musically on the drumset, and he knows all of the mallet instruments and he composes. That's what it takes.

Guys like Michael Brecker, who's a horn player, and Jaco, who plays bass—these guys can sit down at my drumset and sound great. They've all got their own beats. All of the horn players who have played with Elvin can play mean drums. It's important for them to know about the drums, and it's important for a drummer to know about the things that make up the rest of the music world. After a show, Joe and Jaco would sometimes talk about something they had played like it was an inside joke. They would say things like, "... and when you went into that E-flat and I played . . . ," and they would be

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Alex Acuna's reasons for playing Yamaha System Drums.

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laughing with glee because one guy played *this* substitution on top of *that.* You've got to learn the language. You're in for a lot more fun. I have some books Dan Haerle wrote for keyboard, and I'm eating them up, learning about voicings. I know a good voicing when I hear one, but when I look at the keyboard, I can't extract one as quickly as I want to. I wish I'd taken my piano lessons more seriously. I used to go, "Yuk! I hate it!" I used to make up excuses to cancel my piano lesson because I hadn't practiced. You know, you can only do so much when you're a kid and still remain a kid. But the good music schools require a certain keyboard proficiency. Most people get through it and then forget about it, but the intent behind it is good. Look at Jack DeJohnette—I think he originally was a piano player. I've heard him play piano on gigs. It's wild.

RM: Philly Joe plays piano too, and Elvin plays guitar.

PE: Yeah? He plays guitar? I didn't know that!

RM: Check out "Elvin's Guitar Blues" on the *Heavy Sounds* album.

PE: That's it. That's why *he* plays so melodically. He knows the stuff.

RM: Do you ever feel that too many drummers are just concerned with chops, rather than with music?

PE: I don't know. That was always the picture. It's amazingly seductive to go wild on the drums because it feels so good, and a lot of us go through periods of overplaying the instrument. And there's the whole thing of the glorified drum solo where people go crazy. People like that. People like to watch a building burning down and people like to see a drummer go crazy during a drum solo. But a musician has to think, "What am I doing with this instrument here? What do I want to say?" I think when you're younger, you go for that flashier kind of thing because you get that feedback of "Wow!" when you're doing a big-deal drum solo and sweat is flying and you're having a heart attack by the end of the thing. But after a while you prove to yourself that you can play that stuff, and getting "Wows!" from the audience becomes less and less important. It's good to play with some energy, and I think it's good to blend a little bit of drama into your music. You want to get your audience into what you're doing. But as far as long drum solos and stuff, I think you should ask yourself, "Musically, is that really what's happening?" A lot of musicians aren't really crazy about a lot of drum solos. I think the trend is more towards musicality.

When I hear a drummer, I listen for the propulsion of the time, the smoothness, the clarity of the rhythms, and if it just feels good. When I hear great drummers, I find myself laughing. It's so much fun to hear someone do something well. My mouth can drop open at what some drummers do, but I don't find myself really feeling good that I heard it, as opposed to the way I feel when I hear one of the real masters. I listen to bebop drummers a lot for inspiration. I think that's a good thing to check out if you want to play any jazz at all, because these drummers are geniuses—the musicality and sense of humor they have; the way the stuff swings; the way it moves. I want to get closer to the way Elvin Jones plays—the way the sound just rolls out and propels everything.

Listening to some of the more contemporary classical music has been a real good influence because of the way some composers do the variations of themes, and the way they compress and expand the themes. I try to do that when I compose at the drums. When I play a solo, I try to keep it thematic. To me, whatever you play has to continue what has gone on before and move towards what will go on after. It has to make some kind of musical sense. It's not just going wild. It's like telling a good joke—it has to build to something. But some comedians get laughs just by running around and falling down a lot.

RM: I've spoken to some musicians who have very definite ideas about where they fit in historically with what they are doing. Do you ever look at yourself in that way?

PE: Not really. I have a pretty good sense of self, in that I know what I can do, what I can't do, and what I want to do. After playing with Weather Report, I discovered that there are a lot of things I want to learn, but one thing I *do* know is, after playing with them, I'm not afraid to play with anyone. I feel strong as a musician, and I feel confident in my ability to play the drums, and I'm glad for that. You can't sit around and worry about how people are going to judge you historically, because then you will be living in some kind of future tense. It's a very ego-oriented trip. It's like thinking, "When I'm dead, everybody's really going to miss me."

I feel a comfortable synthesis of what I play. I'm a product of our nuclear age. I would love to be coming from a more jazz direction, but I love playing all sorts of stuff. So I just hope I can continue playing with good musicians for the rest of my life, because I really don't enjoy much else. I don't have too many hobbies. I guess I'm not the well-rounded genius I always hoped I would be. [laughs] Athletically, I'm a disgrace. If *Modern Drummer* puts together a softball team, don't bother calling me for it. I've got to get that a little more together, because sports are a good thing for musicians to be in. It keeps you vital. You can't just be a musician. You've

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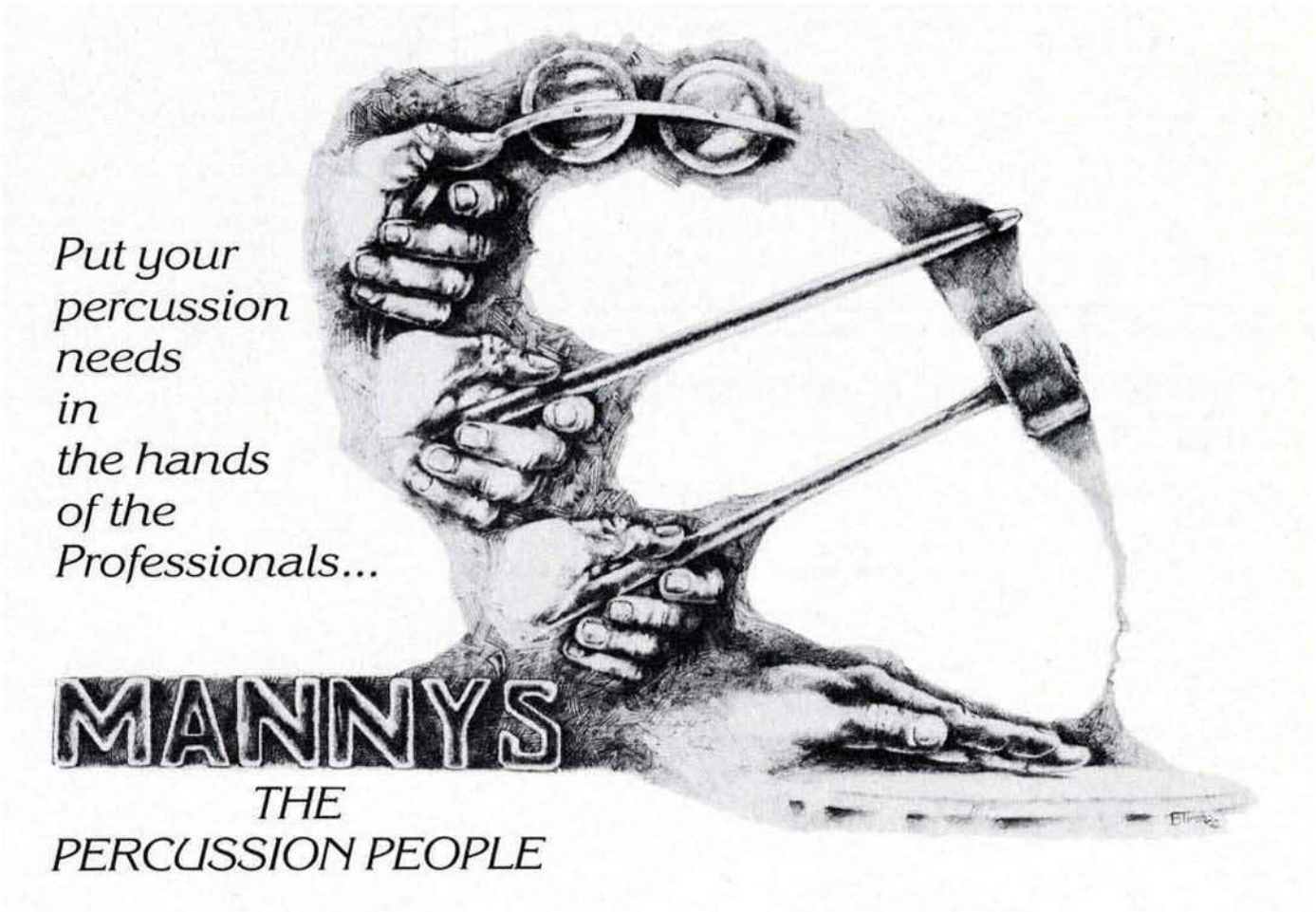

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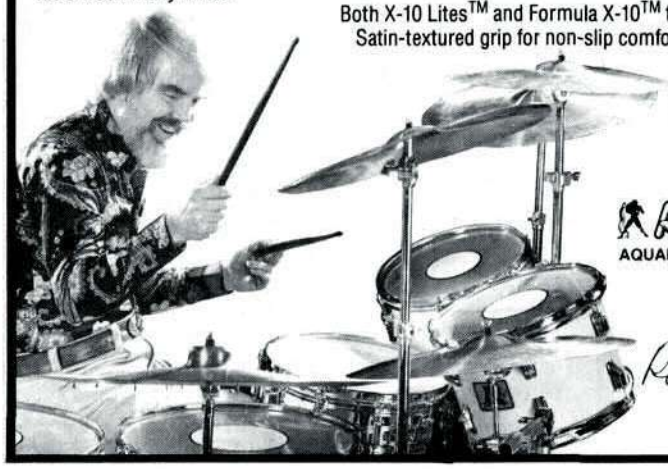

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Roy Burns

got to get out in the world.

RM: That idea of a musician needing to get out in the world brings up something you said earlier about learning a lot about life while you were in Weather Report. How does life experience affect one's musicianship?

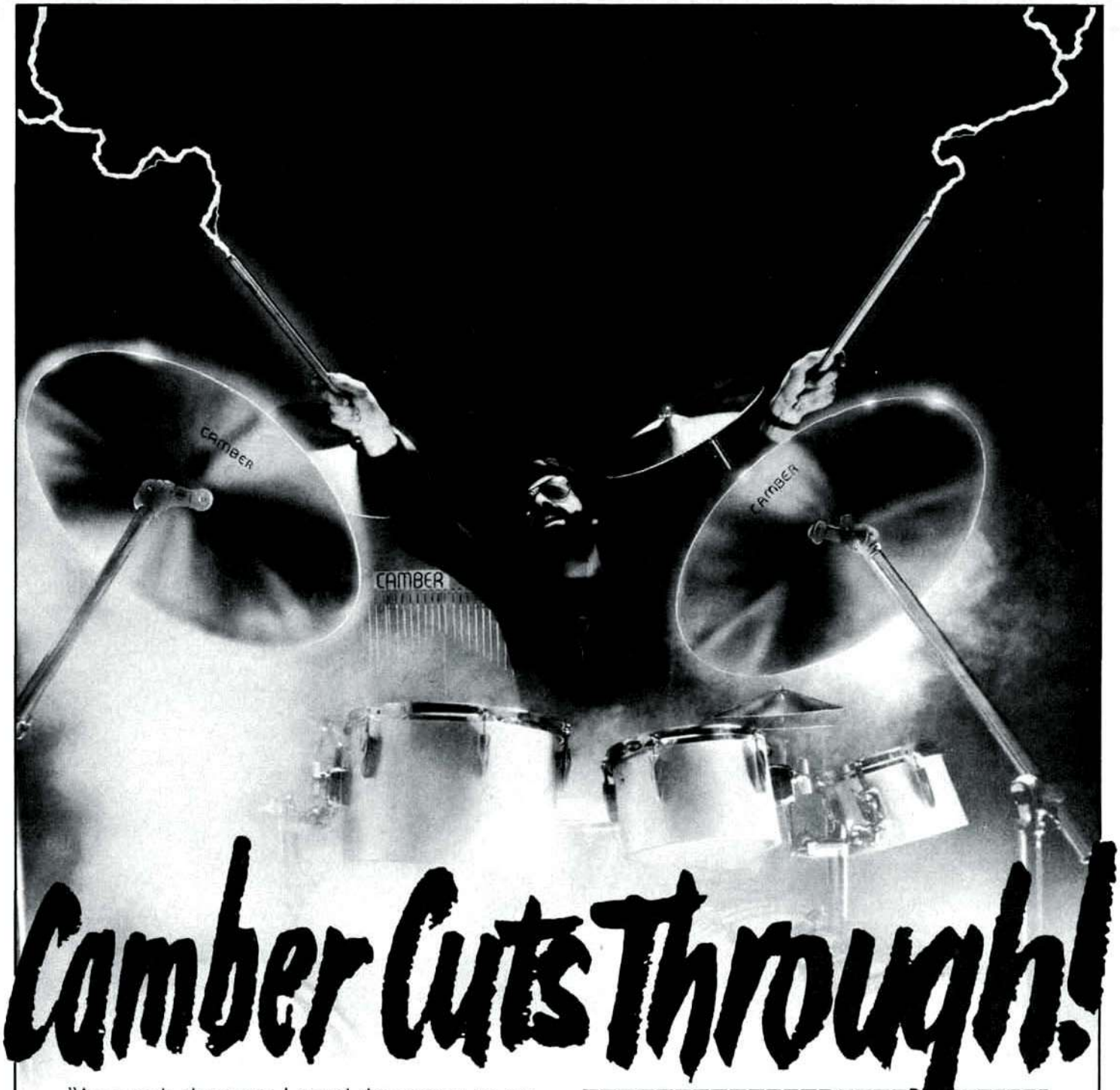
PE: I think the most vital music is created by musicians who are vital people. They have something to offer. Music is only a reflection. Once you get past the things you learned in school—the techniques and licks and whatever—it's what you are and what you believe in that's going to come out. Sometimes that's a subtle influence and sometimes it's pretty profound. Certainly in drumming it's very evident. You can hear from the music what kind of person that drummer is. The amount of space, the sensitivity which involves shadings and touch, the way the music is propelled, how hard it swings or how gutsy it is—that's all reflective of a drummer's personality. The reason a person plays a certain way is because something inside the person picks up on something and uses that in the music.

RM: Do you ever consciously call on some experience or emotion while you're playing?

PE: No. Sometimes that inadvertently happens. You might flash on something, but that's very rare. Only a couple of times have I been playing my instrument where at the same point I got very upset about something and maybe started hitting the drums harder. Drums are a nice physical release, and that release can be good. Sometimes in Weather Report, Joe would try to provoke certain outbursts from me on the drums to sort of let me experience the freedom that comes. But even if you get real angry on your instrument, you have to control and discipline your anger. You can't just go apeshit and start banging away at everything. You have to channel that anger into a statement. So I don't consciously call on things, like "method" music making. It just seems to come out.

There's also a certain amount of artistic integrity and professionalism involved. Just because you've had a lousy day you don't go out and make your audience feel uncomfortable. I mean, you've got to realize that people pay money to come and hear you. So you've got to do the best you can under the circumstances. It's hard to separate, but yet, a lot of times I've played my best when I've really felt sick. I've had the flu or something, and the last thing I'm worried about is how I sound—I just want to get through it. When that happens, you often play very well because you're not self-conscious about how you sound. You're functioning on a real musical level.

The final thing it comes down to is, how does it sound? When you're talking about being a professional musician, that's all that matters. Not every night is going to be the best, but you *try* your best and see what you get.



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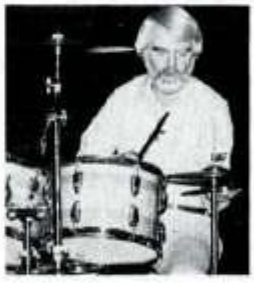
by Roy Burns

Do Self-Taught Drummers Play Better?



Some well-known drummers, who have never taken lessons, play very well. Other well-known drummers, who have studied for years, also play very well.

Drummers who have not studied sometimes tend to be critical of those who have. The following defensive statements were taken from interviews of well-known drummers who have not studied.

"I never took a lesson in my life."

"I don't think drummers should practice too much. It hurts their feel."

"I was just a natural player."

"If you study too much you won't be able to swing."

"Drum clinics are garbage."

"Just play man. Everything will be cool."

Without taking sides in the controversy, let's examine what is really taking place.

1. *There are two sides to every argument. However, are these arguments real or imagined?* In my experience everyone is self-taught or no one is self-taught. If this sounds confusing, it is—until you examine it.

All good players teach themselves how to play whether or not they have studied. They learn how to play by playing, listening and watching. In other words, they are learning from others all the time. So, in a way, self-taught players are not really self-taught at all. It is just that they have never taken drum lessons.

The drummer who *has* taken lessons also learns to play by playing, listening and watching. So where is the difference? The process is the same for everyone.

The difference is the studied player has more information about music and his instrument. This is no guarantee that he will play better than the unstudied player. However, he has the chance to learn more and to continue to grow musically because he has a strong foundation. He also, hopefully, has learned *how* to study. This skill will serve him well in the years ahead as he develops.

For example, drummers like Steve Gadd, Louie Bellson, Dave Garibaldi, Max Roach, Billy Cobham, Jack DeJohnette, Dan Gottlieb, Ed Soph, Jeff Porcaro, Ed Shaughnessy and Sherman Ferguson (to name just a few) have all studied both drums and music. Each one plays his own style, which he learned pretty much on his own. However, the key is that they each developed and are still developing their individual style. They all read well and all have spent plenty of time in the practice room at one time or another.

Studying develops the mind, and it is the development of a musical mind that is an integral part of every great drummer's growth. Studying also helps to develop self-discipline and a sense of organization relative to ideas.

It is also possible to continue to grow and develop musically with very little knowledge of drumming and music. However, it is much tougher. It is sort of like trying to cook food without a recipe. Sometimes you get lucky and sometimes you don't. The trial and error method of learning can have benefits, but it takes longer.

Studying with a good teacher gets most of the technical hang-ups out of the way early. Concentrating on the music is then approached with more confidence.

2. *The type of music being played must be considered.* For example, if you want to be a studio drummer, a symphonic drummer, an all-around percussion player, a rudimental drummer, a contemporary big band drummer or an accomplished rock drummer, your chances will be greatly enhanced if you have studied.

If your only desire is to bang out a little rhythm in the garage with your friends, not much training will be needed. You may find, however, that this will not satisfy your musical desires as you grow older. It is often a shock when the band outgrows the drummer and decides to get a new one. If you develop slower than the others in the group, you will be out of it at some point. Also, if you develop faster than your friends, you may have the chance to join a better group sooner, or even start your own group.

3. *The longer you wait to begin to study, the more difficult the decision becomes.* Many young players are embarrassed to take lessons because they feel self-conscious. It's much like a high school student being asked to go back to the third grade. It seems humiliating.

However, if you can already play somewhat, why not add to your information and knowledge? Put your fear and ego aside and begin to develop your mind today. Don't wait.

4. *Good drummers who have studied don't spend time criticizing those who haven't.* They usually understand that each person teaches himself how to play. No one else can do it for you; you do it for yourself.

As the song says, "With a little help from my friends," life is a little easier and a lot more fun. Don't be ashamed to learn from someone else.

Don't waste time arguing, just learn all you can, any way you can, all the time. If that means studying and that goes against your grain, just ask yourself the following question: "How much do I really want to play?" If the answer is, "Playing is very important to me," then I urge you to re-evaluate some of your ideas. Remember, you and no one else, are responsible for your own development as a drummer and as a person. How good do you want to be?

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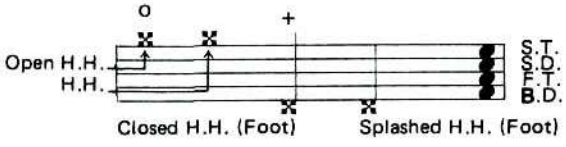
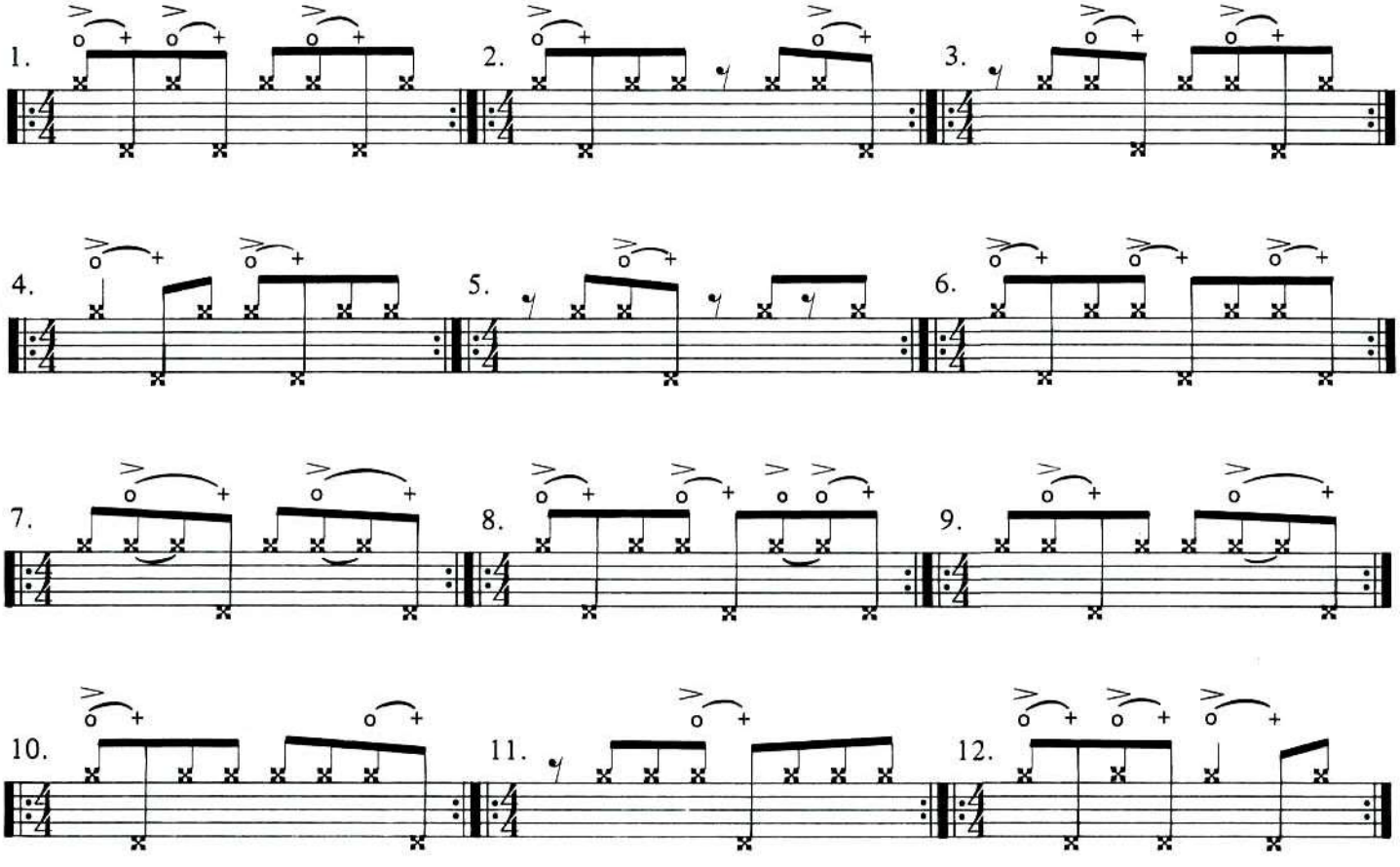
by Sal Sofia

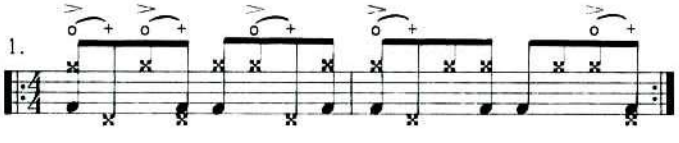
Hi-Hat Technique in Different Styles

The hi-hat is for modern drumset playing what brakes are to a car—very necessary. It adds color and spice, and gives that final touch that makes one style of music distinctive from the next. The preciseness with which you play the hi-hat (exactly when the hi-hat is opened, closed or silent) is becoming more and more a requirement for professional playing. To facilitate its learning, I have written the following twelve patterns. First, play the patterns with only the hand and the foot on the hi-hat.

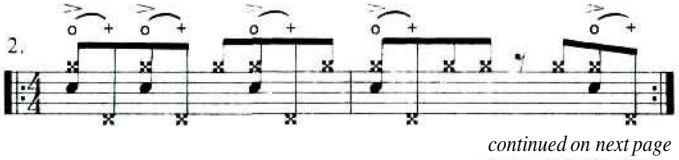




After you feel comfortable playing the patterns, apply the bass drum as indicated in Example 1 to all twelve patterns.



Now, apply the left hand on the snare drum to reinforce the opened hi-hat as indicated in Example 2 to all twelve patterns.



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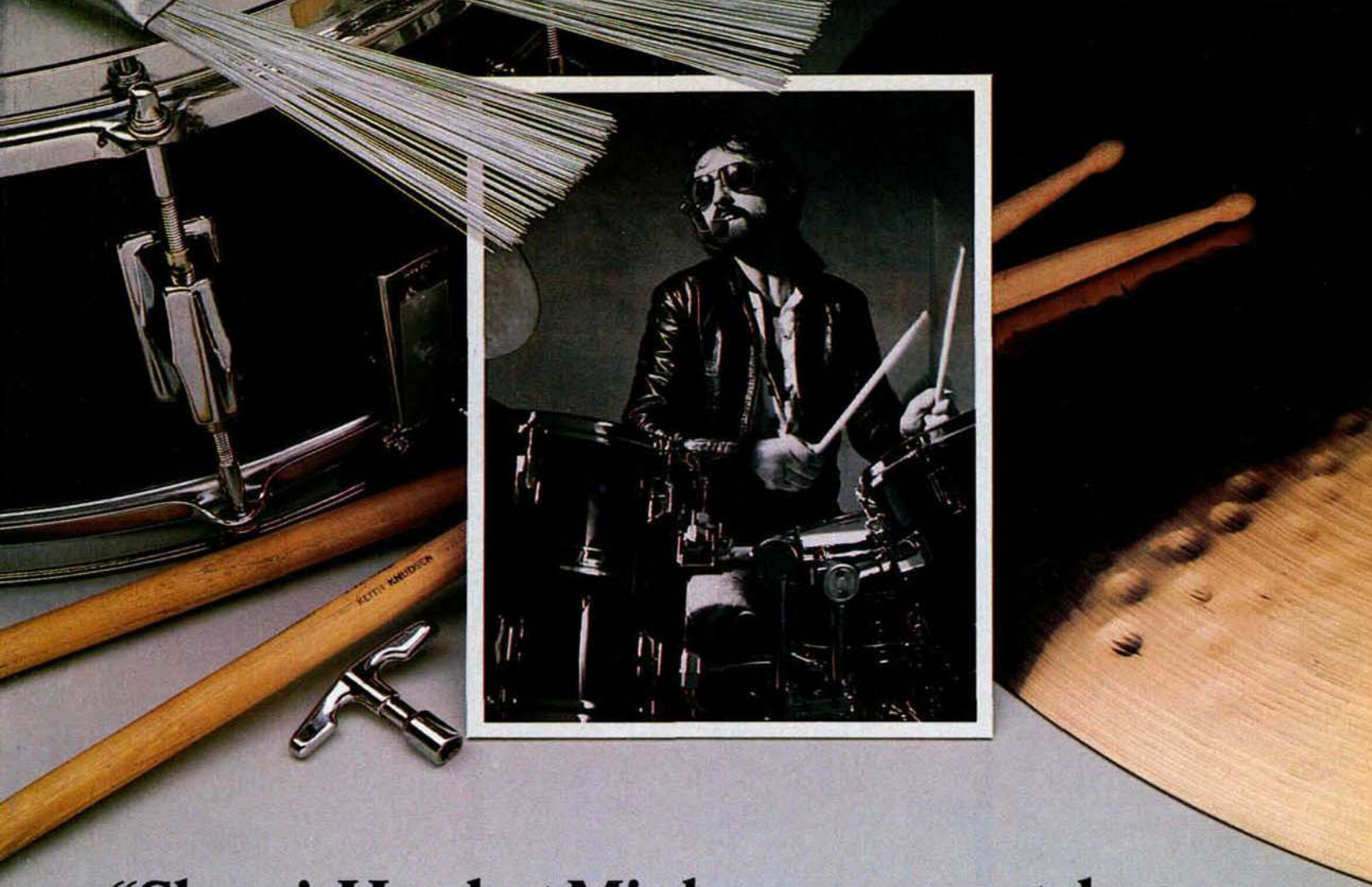

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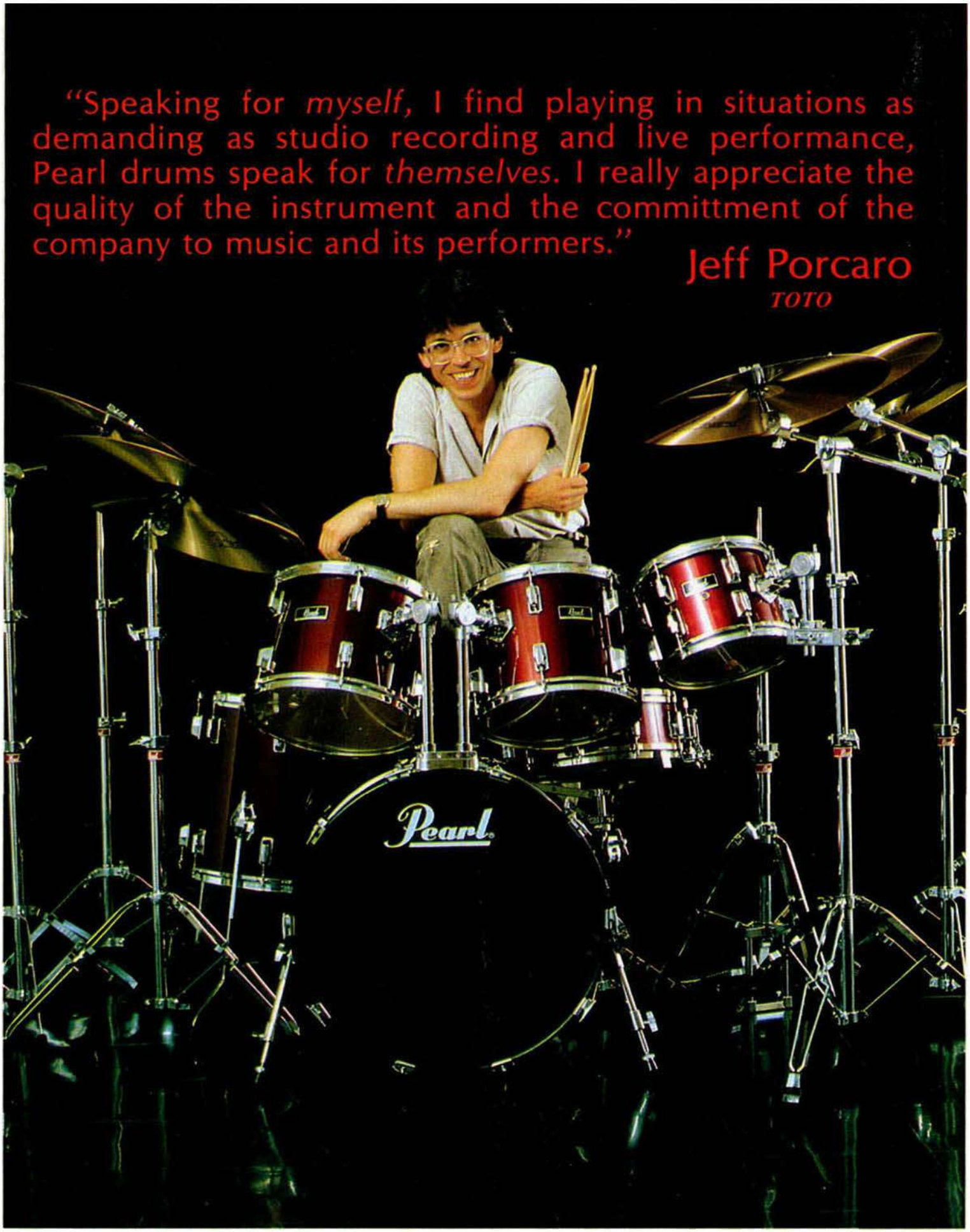
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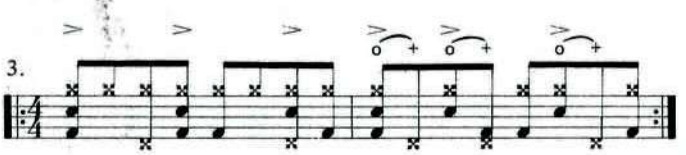
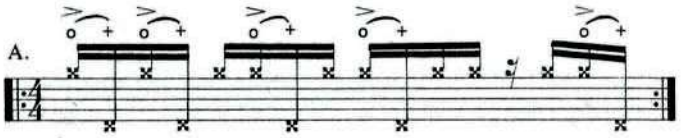
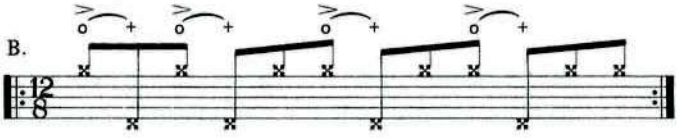
Next, mix one bar of bossa nova and one bar of the twelve hi-hat patterns as indicated in Example 3 to apply the technique in a musical context.



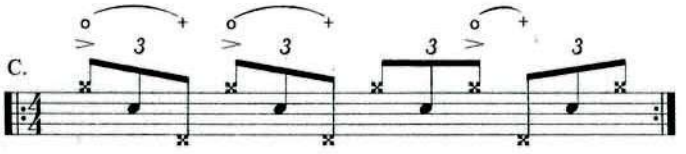
To obtain a double-time or half-time feel, the first two patterns are converted to a sixteenth-note feel as indicated in Example A.



To play an open and closed hi-hat in a funky shuffle, the first three quarter notes of Example A are converted into a twelve-eight time feel.

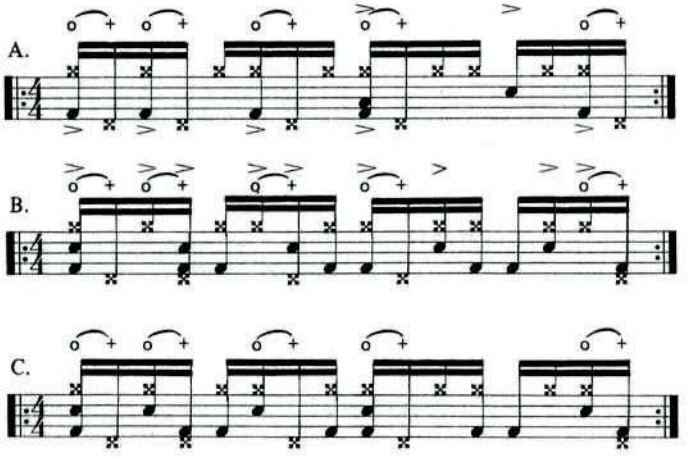


To apply the hi-hat in a jazz context, pattern 1 is converted into a triplet feel.

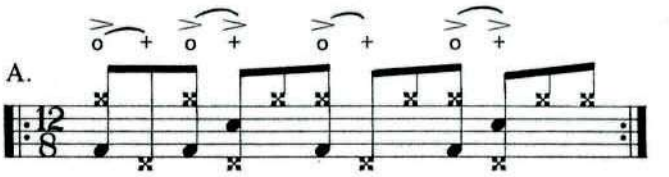


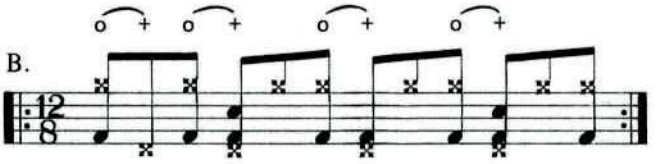
From examples A, B and C, three variations have been derived for each example by adding the bass drum and snare drum, to allow for a more definitive style with increased independence and coordination.

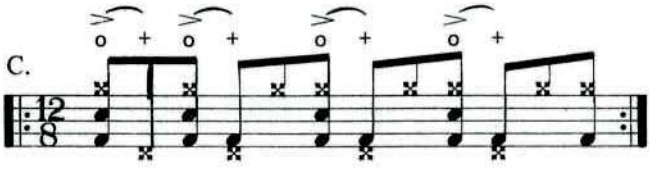
Variation 1: Written with a Latin-funk feel.



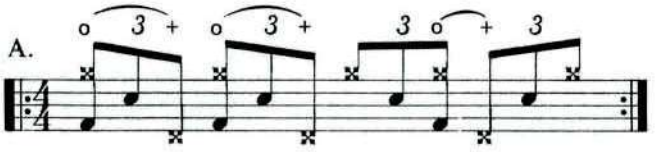
Variation 2: Written for a funky shuffle.

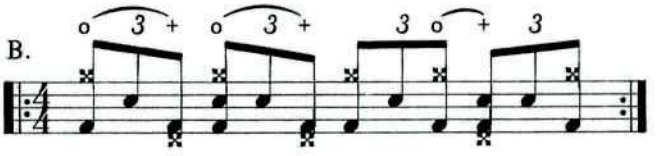


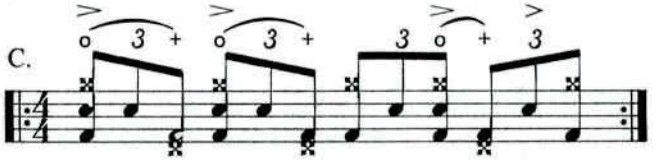




Variation 3: Written in a jazz feel.







For more interesting playing, a bass drum shuffle was added on B and C of all three variations. Note, that in B of Variation 1, a Latin-clave rhythm was added to the snare drum.

For even more insight into hi-hat playing in different styles, try to transpose from the original twelve patterns as demonstrated in the article.

by Rick Van Horn

Establishing Tempo

Drummers from every style of music have been interviewed in this magazine, and while they might express widely different philosophies or advocate various techniques of playing, they all seem to agree on one thing: the importance of keeping good time. Bandleaders and bass players have also been quoted as saying that good timekeeping is their number one requirement in a drummer. For a show drummer it is important; for a club drummer in a dance band, it is critical.

I define good time as the ability to control the consistency of the tempo within a song; either to keep it rock solid (against the tendency of a soloist to rush or drag, for example) or to engineer deliberate shifts in the tempo in order to achieve an intentional effect.

But having the best time in the world won't help if the group has difficulty establishing the correct initial tempo for a song. This is a common and very understandable problem in club bands. When any individual counts off a tune, he is pulling a tempo out of thin air, and that tempo is going to be based on his particular concept of how fast that song should be. On any given performance, his concept is going to be influenced by a number of, what I call, "controlling factors." These include:

1. *Basic metabolism.* Different people live at different speeds. This is why we call some people "hyper" and others "laid back" or "low key." These people will actually perceive the "correct" tempo for a song at widely differing rates of speed, based on what is comfortable for them relative to their own inner clock.
2. *Physical fatigue.* A tired player will generally feel tempos slower than one who is fresh. If you come to the gig after a long day of yard work, and the other players have spent the day on the couch watching the ball game, you're likely to feel the tempos at a slower rate than they will.
3. *Emotional level.* You might be very rested, but a little depressed about something. Again your perception of tempo is likely to be slower than normal. On the other hand, if you've had an extremely "up" day, and you come to the gig excited and happy, you could have a tendency to feel the tempos a good deal faster than usual.

Conflict over initial tempos arises when some members of the group fall into one of the above-listed categories, while the rest fall into another. Thus, the perception of "correct" tempo differs from player to player, and nobody feels comfortable. The importance of "correct" tempo to a club band is based on a simple fact: your audience is already familiar with this music. They have heard the songs on the car radio or stereo at home, and are used to the tempos they have heard. The feel, and especially the danceability of the song are affected if your tempos are too different from what they are used to. Many customers will criticize a band with something like the following statement: "They sound fine—they're good players. But they seem to rush (or drag) everything; they just aren't danceable." The complaint isn't that the tempos shift within the song (that the time isn't consistent), but rather that the initial tempos aren't comfortable.

Of course, audiences are subject to the same factors controlling perception of tempo that I listed for players. On a crowded, busy night, the general enthusiasm level tends to build, and as people's adrenalin level rises, their perception of tempos usually accellerates. This is why concert acts usually play their songs faster than the recorded version. But you have to keep in mind that *your* audience members are also including physical movement—dancing—in their reactions to your songs, and while their emotional level might accomodate a different tempo, their bodies may still not be comfortable with anything other than what they're familiar with. You can't let the charge you get from a happy audience allow you to run away with tempos. That happy audience can be alienated very quickly without ever realizing why.

Standard procedure with most bands is to have one individual determine the tempos. Most often this is the bandleader, who counts off all the tunes. But he is not impervious to the "controlling factors," and although he may be very conscious of them, there's no guarantee he can overcome them. He's only human. So my band took the responsibility off the shoulders of the leader (or any of us, for that matter) and gave it to an individual who was not subject to the "controlling factors": a metronome. And before I get letters decrying my cop-out to a mechanical device instead of relying on training and musical ability, let me tell you how we used the metronome, what it achieved, and what our attitude was toward its use.

How We Used It

The idea was simple. Since most people feel that the correct tempo for any given dance song is the one they've heard on the record, we played the record for each of our tunes and clocked it against the metronome to establish the beats-per-minute tempo setting. (It was interesting to note that very few tunes were rock-steady against the metronome. Even recorded versions tend to accelerate and decelerate within each song.) Once we had the tempo settings, we listed them alongside each title on our song list.

We used an AC-powered electric metronome, so it would not be subject to battery slowdown or require re-winding as a clockwork unit does. We could rely on it to remain accurate at all times. The unit had a blinking light on top, as well as a switchable click sound, which we left in the' 'off" position. I simply mounted the unit in an inconspicuous place on stage where I could reach it, and masked it from the audience with a little gaffer's tape. I could see the blinking light, and our bass player could also; the audience could not. When our bandleader called a tune, I checked the tempo setting on the list we had made, and set the metronome to that reading. I took a few beats from the blinking light and then counted off the tune for the band accordingly. It didn't take long for me to begin to memorize the settings for our most frequently-played songs, so there was very little time taken up for this operation. Since many of the songs were at the same basic tempo, I was not required to make setting changes for each and every one. Also, we tended to play our slow songs without using the metronome at all.

What It Achieved

We achieved very dramatic results using the metronome, and they weren't all musical. Since we now had an objective, reliable source of tempo information, we no

longer had conflicts between band members over what was the right tempo for a given song. This had become a serious source of discord, caused only by the difference in personality-related tempo perception I have already mentioned. The metronome was not subject to either physical or emotional highs or lows, and could give us the same tempo, night after night, for each song. This released us from a tremendous psychological pressure. We became free to concentrate on playing well, rather than on how fast we were playing, or was the audience comfortable with it, or were *we* comfortable, etc. Our complete attention could be turned to the expressiveness of the performance, rather than the technical elements of playing. We discovered that the metronome could even be used to adjust to the ups and downs of audiences. If it was a busy night, and the audience was excited and energetic, then the overall pace of the evening could go up. To achieve this, we merely increased each listed tempo setting by a few beats per minute. In this way, we and the audience felt more comfortable, and the songs maintained the same general impression of tempo variety relative to each other.

Our Attitude Towards It

Our attitude towards using the metronome was skeptical at first. None of us like the idea of relying on a machine to control a major element of our performance. But as we started working with it, and realized how far afield some of our tempos had gone from the original recorded versions, we saw the need for some kind of reliable guide. We also had the sense to realize that this was a tool, and *we* were to use *it,* not the other way around. As might be expected, after a few weeks of using the unit, we improved our own sense of tempo, and did not rely on the metronome for each song. But when critical songs came up, we had it there as the final arbiter of "correct" tempo, and we could turn to it and be sure we were giving our audience the "danceability" they sought.

Every drum teacher I've ever known has advocated the use of a metronome as a developmental aid, helping to improve the ability to play comfortably and well at various tempos. We simply took the same approach as a band, using the metronome to help us establish the best tempos to work with in order to make our performance as enjoyable as possible for our audience and for ourselves.

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TEAR OFF OR MAKE A PHOTOCOPY

Thompson *continued from page 17*
new apartment—now what am I going to do? What can I say? I feel like I've really been blessed because everything has worked out and it definitely wasn't my own doing.

SH: What did happen?

CT: There was always a session—enough to get me through. As it turned out, looking back on it, I definitely needed to get off the road. I had been on the road constantly for three years and you forget who you are. At some point you need to be still and check yourself out because each group has a certain vibe and you get caught up in the vibe of the group and all that. Like with Zappa's band, it's full of inside jokes which, by the time the public hears about them, they don't mean anything any more—they just sound funny. Imagine the culture shock. I mean, playing in a little jazz club on the weekends in Balitmore and then being with Frank Zappa. Let's face it, Baltimore, to a black, is quite oppressive. There are a lot of us here—that's not saying you can't get it together here, because you can in fact. But until you leave this city and find out what is going on in the rest of the world, you find that you think things are a certain way. Like I say, all of a sudden I found myself with Frank Zappa and a bunch of people with all kinds of ethnic and cultural backgrounds who were in a position to be almost whatever they wanted to be and to do things almost any way they wanted to do them. That was quite a shock. That was quite an awakening for me actually. Then Weather Report was a whole different trip altogether. I mean, I had idolized these guys for years. After that I did one album I was really happy about; they only used one track, but I was still happy about it, the one with the Brazilian guy Hermeto. He plays keyboard, guitars, woodwinds and he has a brother who has been with Harry Belafonte for years and years and they look almost alike. He was some kind of different genius. I mean, fifteen years ago in Brazil he was doing what Zappa's doing. I got to do some stuff with him in which I learned a lot.

SH: He has a weird approach to percussion?

CT: That and just music period. Just his approach, his daring to get away from the conventional way of doing things. This guy does concerts in Brazil with live farm animals on stage. The sounds they make fit in perfectly with his compositions. It's not there just to have; he uses it.

SH: I heard an album he made a few years ago. I think Airto produced it. He played apple juice bottles on it.

CT: All the top session players in New York were playing bottles—it was weird. That's the trouble, his budgets go so far over he has to sell too many albums to break even.

After that I went out with "The Wiz." There was a company that started in L.A. That was good. I had never done a Broadway show. I had done some small-scale things, but I had never played with a major show. My whole trip is I want to do everything.

SH: That's a real nice score, especially the first half of the show up to the intermission.

CT: It was beautiful. It was that kind of thing. I did that for a while, and I was doing that when Phil called. I was in San Francisco playing with ''The Wiz" when all of a sudden I got this phone call saying, "Hi, this is Phil Collins. Do you want to join Genesis?"

SH: And you said, "Who is Genesis?"

CT: No, I knew who they were, only because they were Alphonso's favorite band. When we were playing with Weather Report, he'd be playing Genesis tapes all the time. That's how I knew who they were, and what I heard I liked. I'm really into playing something different. I'm not at all about one thing—I don't consider myself a jazz drummer or rock drummer—I just consider myself a musician. If the job calls for something I don't ordinarily do, so much the better. One thing I had never played was any real English music and it's such a different train of thought from anything I had ever played, I just couldn't turn it down.

SH: Is there a different concept behind drums over there?

CT: Oh, yeah. The main thing is that whereas we tend to embellish things a little more, a little flourish between the beats, probably coming from jazz roots or whatever, they sort of leave all that out—straight to the point. That's why a lot of times it sounds so skeletal, just bass and snare, without all that stuff in between. Real basic and powerful, and they play right on top of the beat. Because there is so much space, we think they are playing behind the beat. In fact, they are playing with space, but very much on top of the beat, which was the biggest thing I had to learn.

SH: You mean exactly on beat?

CT: No, dead ahead of it, pushing it a bit. But because there are not a whole lot of beats in between, *you think* they drag. Most Americans, when they try to play something English, play behind the beat. Especially with drummers, everybody makes it sound like it's dragging. English drummers don't, which is what I finally found out. Even though there is space, they are pushing the beat. That, for me, was the biggest difference, because I was into a lot of left hand, rolling stuff in between. But you see, that doesn't apply any more because Phil and I have had this weird sort of cultural exchange, that's the way I look at it. All of a sudden, he sounds more like an r&b drummer and I've been playing a bit more disciplined on some things, which is great.

It used to be that there were some licks that were mine and some that were his. Now, if you listen to things that either one of us is on, you don't know where they came from any more. I actually prefer Phil's playing to any of the other English drummers I've heard, aside from Simon Phillips. I love Simon Phillips' playing. Other than that, Phil is probably my choice—my favorite drummer over on the other side of the ocean. Phil has a little something that I like that's hard to explain. The whole point about Phil, which I didn't realize until I had been in the band for over a year, is that a lot of stuff he ends up doing is his way of trying to do what American drummers did.

He did stuff, I'm especially talking about the older stuff, that was really quite adventurous for the group at the time that they did it. It always came out as fresh and new because he had an English background and he played his interpretation of the way American drummers played. The other cats in the band definitely weren't playing like Americans at all, so the result was something pretty

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fresh. Everybody always asks how is it to play with two drummers, but with Phil it's easy. With Ralph Humphrey we both had to be constantly working; we had two entirely different concepts of playing.

SH: If he's one of your favorite English drummers, who do you like on this side?

CT: My favorites go back years, and they are still my favorites. My two favorites in the world are Max Roach and Elvin Jones, then Tony Williams and Jack DeJohnette. I love Steve Gadd's playing.

SH: Do you go back to Art Blakey too?

CT: Oh yeah, I love Art. I still go to see them whenever I can because they all are still on the road and they are all still playing their butts off.

SH: And they all still wind up at the Famous Ballroom. Do you ever go back up there to those little jazz clubs?

CT: Sure. I even played those places. The last group I was in before I left Baltimore was O'Donnell Levy on guitar, Charlie Covington and myself. We had a lot of amazing stuff we were playing. It was a serious band.

SH: Did you manage to live off that while you were in town?

CT: Sure, it didn't cost much to live in Baltimore then. I lived at home until I was eighteen or so and then I started gradually moving out. O'Donnell and I usually shared a place together as well so it was still pretty cheap. I had one other job; a paper route when I was a little kid. When I was in college I couldn't play more than a couple of nights a week and make my grades, so I took a job at the Rec Center working in the gym, coaching basketball. That's the only other gig I have actually had to do. Everything else has strictly been playing.

SH: Do you practice a lot?

CT: Oh yeah, I still have to practice but it doesn't take as much as it used to. Before every show I have to spend some time warming up. Between tours I especially have to practice.

SH: The thing with Genesis is an ongoing, pretty steady gig?

CT: As steady as anything ever has been up to this point. I really try to take it one day at a time. It's a good gig; it has been a steady gig. I'm still not in the band, you see, so I try not to be too dependent on it. So I still have to keep my things going.

When I first went out with *Zappa,* I didn't know anybody out there and it got really weird after a while playing nothing but his music, which is really intense. As much as I love Frank's stuff and as much as I've learned from him, Weather Report was a welcome change because not knowing anybody out there, it was kind of hard. Here you have a couple of clubs, and you can just go sit in and jam. You don't have that in L.A. They are few and far between. You have thousands and thousands of musicians and very few places to play. If you don't know somebody it is hard to get some place to play. A lot of the playing goes on in people's houses. When I want to play now, rather than worry about a gig, I just call a bunch of cats and say, "Come over and play."

SH: And that's mainly where the players get the outlets?

CT: Yeah, that's where most of the playing happens—at different guys' houses. The unions have rehearsal rooms for like 50 cents an hour and they have plenty of them. There's always somebody down there playing. There are rehearsal bands; a lot of big bands that are rehearsal bands and they do that until somebody starts booking gigs. There are things to do, but you really have to actively pursue something to do out there. *Now* I know that, but when I first went there, I didn't. It is not a place where you can sit around and wait to be called.

SH: What are you using for this tour right now?

CT: I've got a Pearl kit. It's custom made. They have since put it into production—calling it the *Genesis* model. It is two 16 x 22 bass drums, all the toms are two inches oversized, and there's an 8 x 14 maple snare. I started using Pearl towards the end of '77.

SH: Before that you were using Ludwigs?

CT: I didn't have any endorsements. I was using Ludwigs that I sort of happened by when I was with Zappa. Ludwig sent Zappa two double kits, so Ralph and I had these identical kits from Ludwig. I played them until they almost fell apart. Fortunately, at that point, Pearl was interested and I liked what they had, so it worked out.

SH: When you went with them initially, you were using fiberglass?

CT: Yeah, they weren't doing wood over here. I went to Japan. The other kit I was talking about, I actually bought from them in Japan because they aren't allowed to give away drums over there. I got a deal with them, paid factory cost for a maple kit, and it was much more happening than any other kit. I really loved it because the Japanese wood is just supreme. Even though Japan is industrial, they've got such good wood there. They just started doing the maple kits here. I'm real happy with them. The only problems I have are ones that just exist with drums, which is if you play rim shots, the rods will loosen up right where you hit the rim shots. These days I tend to shy away from rim shots. I don't like the sound of them. I don't like what they do to my hands. My hands are in awful shape right now. This tour has been so crazy, they are actually split open. I have like four holes in my hands right now where they actually just split open because we have been working so much. Last year and this year—maybe it's age, I don't know—I actually have to tape up before a gig now.

SH: Do you put tape on your fingers?

CT: Only on the bad spots. I've got a split on each thumb; I have to tape each thumb. My forefinger, which is sort of the main job on my right hand, split last night. I have to tape that tonight so it is going to be weird. I have no choice because I have to finish the tour.

I use Paiste cymbals, with the swish cymbal being the only thing that's not Paiste. I even have Paiste hi-hats I can use, because they've always been weird.

SH: What was the problem with the hi-hat?

CT: They just never sounded right to me.

SH: *The Sound Edges!*

continued on next page

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CT: I had been trying them, but I didn't like the sound. They sounded great with just your foot, but once you hit them with the stick it was too weird. I've got some 15" heavy *602* hi-hats. I've got a *Rude* 22" ride cymbal which I love. It's a beautiful cymbal. I'm using a Zildjian swish, which is a 22" and Paiste 2002 crash cymbals.

SH: So the cymbals hold up?

CT: Yeah, I crack a lot of Zildjians; I don't crack Paistes so much. Phil cracks Paistes and he doesn't crack Zildjians so much, so it depends upon how you hit it, I suppose. It's really weird. So as a result, he is endorsing Zildjians and I endorse Paiste. We used to both do Paiste. It is really more practical for him to use Zildjians.

I use *Fiberskyn 2* batter heads, heavy on the snare and medium on the toms, although when I get back to L.A. I am going to switch to all heavies. I think I like them a little better. I use clear heads on the bottoms.

SH: Are the *Fiberskyns* holding up?

CT: They hold up better for me than anything else I have used.

SH: I saw your snare drum—the batter head looks shredded.

CT: But that doesn't really change the sound; it's the amazing thing about those heads. It sort of peels away in layers and there seems to be just hundreds of paper-thin layers in there. I've heard people complain about pitting them and stuff like that, and that they go really quickly. But I find that even though they get a little pitted, the sounds still hold up longer than, say, the black spots or anything like that. But it is about how you play them. When you hit a drum you are supposed to hit it and release immediately. You don't press into the head. You hit it and back off of it so the sounds will happen, you know. If you play them that way then there is no problem. If you sort of dig into them, then you are going to pit them and it's not going to make any difference what kind of heads you use—they just aren't going to last.

SH: What pedals and hardware are you using?

CT: I've got two Ghost pedals. I love Pearl pedals, but I really feel good with my Ghost pedals. It's weird because some Ghost pedals I hate, but I have lucked onto two that really do it for me. I use all the newer Pearl hardware, the 900 line. I am using a single Syndrum on the snare drum. I've got a pickup mounted in the snare that leads into the Syndrum.

SH: Is that like a contact mic'?

CT: Yeah, that's what it is. I had a Barcus Berry that was made onto a snare for me which somebody stole at one of the gigs recently. I've got a contact mic' in my maple snare that's glued to the shell inside.

SH: And that hooks up to the Syndrum?

CT: Yeah. It goes through a little pre-amplifier.

SH: Do you guys use drum machines on stage?

CT: Yeah, we use it on about three songs.

SH: Do you find it weird to work with?

CT: On one song it is a little bit uncomfortable, but it doesn't bother me for most of it.

SH: Which one?

CT: "No Reply." On the record you only hear the hand clap sound but there's actually a lot of stuff that goes on in between that. It can be a little weird. It doesn't really bother me because the other songs we use it on I play very sparsely in, and it works out.

SH: Are you guys doing a lot of double drumming now?

CT: Not as much as we used to. Phil's doing a lot more out front stuff these days. He is not playing as much as he has done in former tours and it's fine by me, of course. We are both playing on a few things; probably a quarter of the show.

SH: How did you guys work the parts together? Did you sit down with the charts?

CT: No, they don't use charts. It's amazing. I have to write my own charts. They don't read at all. I know Tony, at some point, had classical piano and learned the basics of it, but he hasn't had to use it for years and years. Mike and Tony have never been in another band in their lives. So they don't need it, they sort of play what they want and do it. At each rehearsal we try to have a day to sort of tighten up the small things and sort of lay out a plan for the solo. Even though it is different each night we do have a basic plan for it. It is really easy because if there is a question about what the part is, Phil can just sit down and play it. Rather than have somebody, a non-drummer, try to explain what the part is, he can just sit down and do it, so it is easy that way.

SH: You are faced with the situation where Phil records the drums and you have to come in and reproduce what he has already done.

CT: That's basically what I am here for. I can change things a bit, but they do what they do and it works well for them. And I have a lot of respect for Phil's playing so I don't feel I have to turn it all around, because what he has done is usually really good.

SH: How did you orginally get the gig? Did you audition?

CT: No, Phil called and said, "I saw your last Weather Report gig in London. If you want the gig, you've got it. There's no audition." The manager called and said there may be an audition required, but I had already talked to Phil. It was really weird because when he watched the Weather Report gig, at that point they were still looking for a singer so he could stay on drums. His thoughts in the audience that night were, "If I've got to play with another drummer, I'd rather use that guy." Bruford did the first tour, but Bruford moved on.

SH: Did they contact you before they used Bruford?

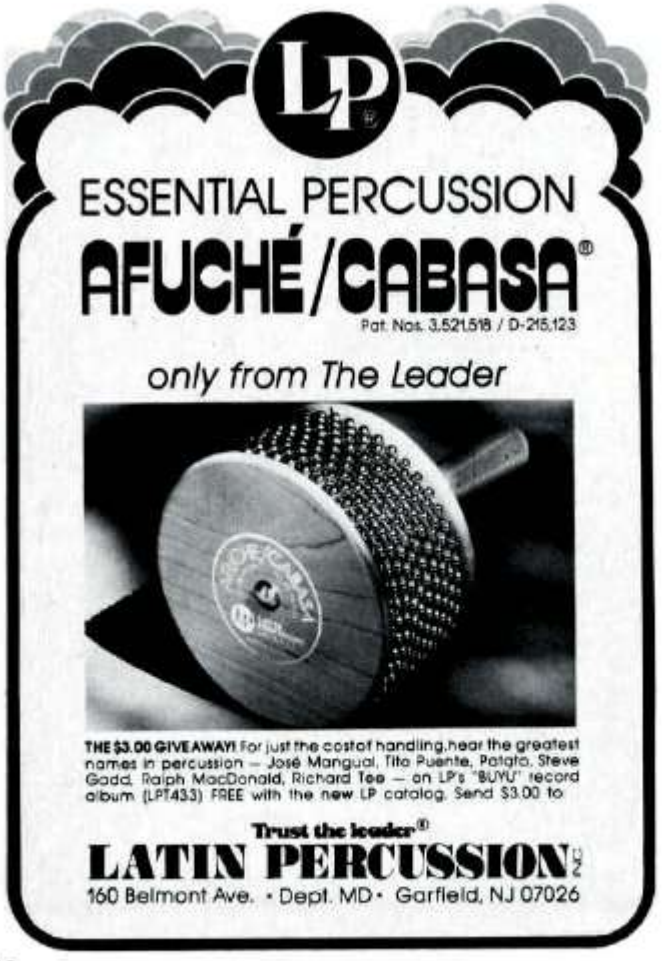
CT: No, I was still with Weather Report at the time. I think it was kind of down to the wire for them because they never intended for Phil to be the singer. They were auditioning guys to do the album, but they didn't find anybody, so he did the album. Then they were still looking for guys to do it out front on the gigs and they still didn't find anybody they were satisfied with, so there he was.

SH: So they decided to get a drummer instead of a singer.

CT: He and Bill were pretty good friends, so it was like, "Help me out."

SH: When he called you up to offer you the gig, what did they want you to do? Just woodshed the tapes and then go on?

CT: Yeah. There was about a month before we got into rehearsals,



so they got some tapes and records to me.

SH: So it works like that with you and them. Everytime you come in, the material is already there?

CT: I've gotten the tape about a month before, but I try not to get too locked into it. Even though you are trying to do what someone else did, although you basically know their style, it's still not the same once you get there. So when we get to rehearsal, we sort of fine tune it. And that's the way we work it out.

SH: How much time does Genesis take up?

CT: Usually about six months out of a year. We didn't go out in '79 at all, but in '77, '78, '80, '81 and this year, it's been about six months out of the year.

SH: What do you do the rest of the time?

CT: I used to do just whatever session I could get. I've got a family now, but before, I'd take tours maybe in between, occasionally do things with Klemmer or there seemed to be enough sessions to keep things going.

SH: And most of these you did in L.A.?

CT: Yeah. This year I've gotten into doing quite a few drum clinics which is a pretty new thing for me.

SH: Do you like it?

CT: Yeah, I enjoy it. I'll soon find out how much I like it because Pearl just asked me to do the Frankfurt Music Fair, which is a trade show, and now they want me to go on the road in Europe for about a month doing nothing but clinics. I have to work it out to decide how much I really want to take on. It's real different from playing gigs, and I don't know how much of it I can handle all of the time.

SH: Do you like the contact you get?

CT: The thing is, I am into helping the young kids. I had a lot of help. I didn't have a lot of teachers who I sat with for a long time, but I was always able to play with older musicians who were much more experienced. There was one drummer in Baltimore named Johnny Polite. This guy, man, I don't know how he ever got stuck in Baltimore. You aren't going to find too many guys who can play more than he played. He would always teach me a lot. If something I was doing just wasn't working, he would teach me this way or that. I always had a lot of that kind of help. When I was at CCB I had some private lessons for a couple of years with a guy named George Gaylor, but that was strictly by the book.

SH: So you consider these clinics as kind of a payback sort of thing?

CT: Probably so, yes. I'm not into teaching on a private basis. I'm not ready to take in students, but in a clinic situation I don't mind it.

SH: And the rest of your time you spend with your band out in L.A.?

CT: Well that's sort of a recent situation. It's something I've been wanting to do for a long time, but it didn't actually come into being until this past summer.

SH: Who is in that band? Is it a floating situation?

CT: No. We managed to get in three concerts and did a bunch of tapes before I had to go back to Genesis. They're all really scary players. Incredibly high musicianship in the group actually.

SH: Do you write at all?

CT: Now I do. As of this year I have been writing quite a lot; the last couple of years actually. But this year I finally got a place to use it because I have my own band now.

SH: When you write music what do you compose on?

CT: I sing ideas into the tape recorder. I've got enough working theory knowledge that I can work out the chords and melody, and if I have to, I play it on the keyboard.

SH: What kind of stuff is your band doing?

CT: Hard to classify. It's really weird because there are songs which I hesitate to call pop, although structurally they are probably more pop oriented. Rhythmically I tend to use a lot of weird combinations of African, Brazilian and funk rhythms, and I am doing most of the writing and most of the arranging. But everybody's got some contribution to it.

SH: Do you give these guys charts?

CT: Strictly head. I can write the charts, but you can't write the vibes. It's like, I can write the part, but it becomes a matter of interpretation and there is something about reading charts you don't really learn. When you read a part all the time, you don't really learn it—you tend to become a bit lazy and you tend to rely on the music. Whereas, it is much stronger if you have to learn it by your head; it doesn't go anywhere, it stays and you don't lose it. I do quite a few experimental things with the band. We'll get together and jam and I won't play the drums, I'll play some other instrument like surdo. Or I'll play some Brazilian stuff on some African instrument and it makes them play real differently. And *then* we'll learn the material because then you learn with a fresh frame of mind.

SH: Do you guys have a contract?

CT: It's being shopped for actually. I have a four-track studio at home and I have done some demos there. What will happen now is that they will generate enough interest for me to go into the studio and do most of the tunes over. It has gotten as far as there being an engineer involved who'll probably be a producer. I don't really want to mention names yet because if it doesn't happen, I don't want to sound silly. There's someone else from Baltimore. It's really weird; there seems to be a whole little Baltimore clique out there in L.A. He's quite known and we'll see what happens. The demo was good enough and the material is strong, so people are interested enough to take the time to go to a good studio and do it and then just shop for a deal. All the feedback I've gotten is really positive so far.

SH: So the rest of the band just gigs around?

CT: Everybody has stuff to do; everybody is working. Fortunately, everybody is in it because they love to do it, because there definitely is no money in it at this point. But everyone just sort of drops what they are doing to come do it. We have a good time. I don't allow them to play cliches; just leave them home. Save them for your sessions; when you come here, let's play.

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Tony Williams

Tony Williams joined Miles Davis in 1963, setting levels of drum technique, musicality and interaction which are models for drummers today.

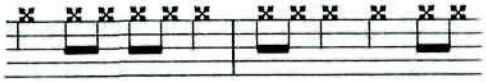
On Miles' *Four and More,* the tightness of the rhythm section seems to give Tony the confidence and the foundation to play incredibly technical figures, vary the texture and still interact musically. His overall style is nothing short of revolutionary, no longer depending on ride cymbal and hi-hat to keep time, but rather using rim shots, varied cymbal sounds, crushed hi-hats, multiple rolls and thundering toms to propel the band. His hi-hat and bass drum chatter as much as many drummers' snare drums—busily interacting with the soloists and the rhythm section.

Williams was particularly fond of cross-rhythms, especially three over two. On "Joshua," he phrases the cross-rhythms over the bar lines on the 3/4 sections, and on "So What," he and Herbie Hancock continuously set up cross-rhythms behind the soloists.

On *Miles Smiles,* recorded in 1966, Tony plays perhaps more freely than on *Four and More,* but less busy. In fact, he tends to focus on one or two sounds for the duration of each tune: On "Orbits," cymbal and cross-stick; on "Circle," brushes; on "Footprints," ride cymbal; on "Dolores," hi-hat and snare.

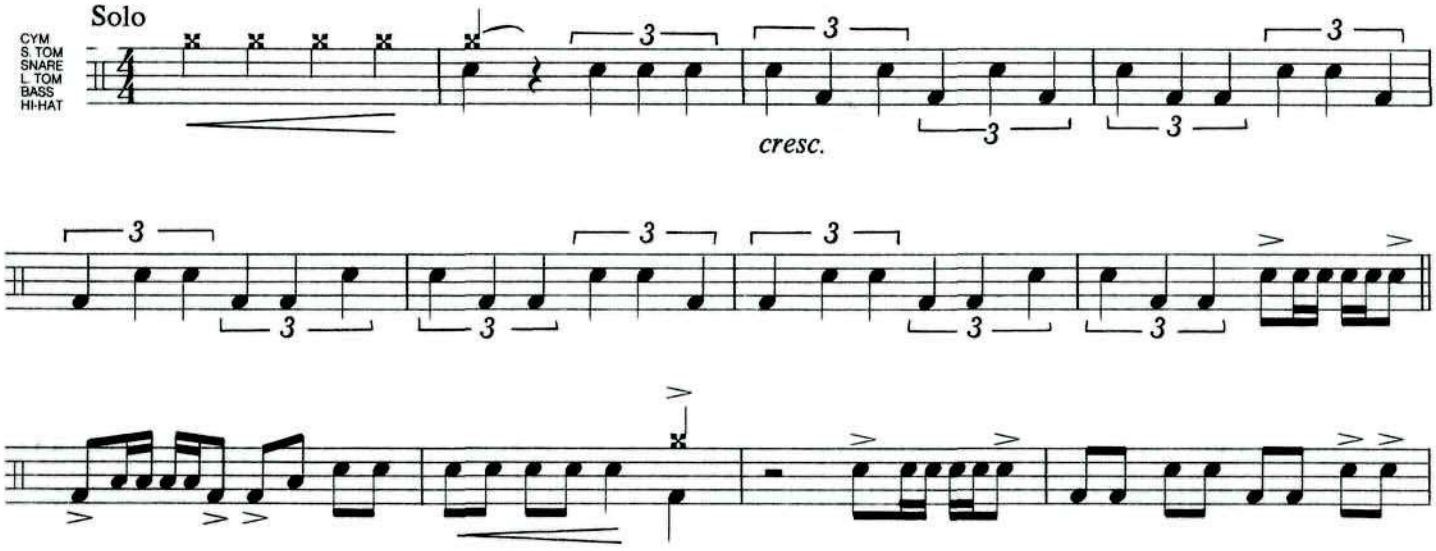
On "Freedom Jazz Dance," Tony plays his hi-hat on all four beats for the duration of the tune, a device used by rock drummers today. In fact, Tony actually plays a typical rock rhythm by adding a backbeat on Wayne Shorter's solo.

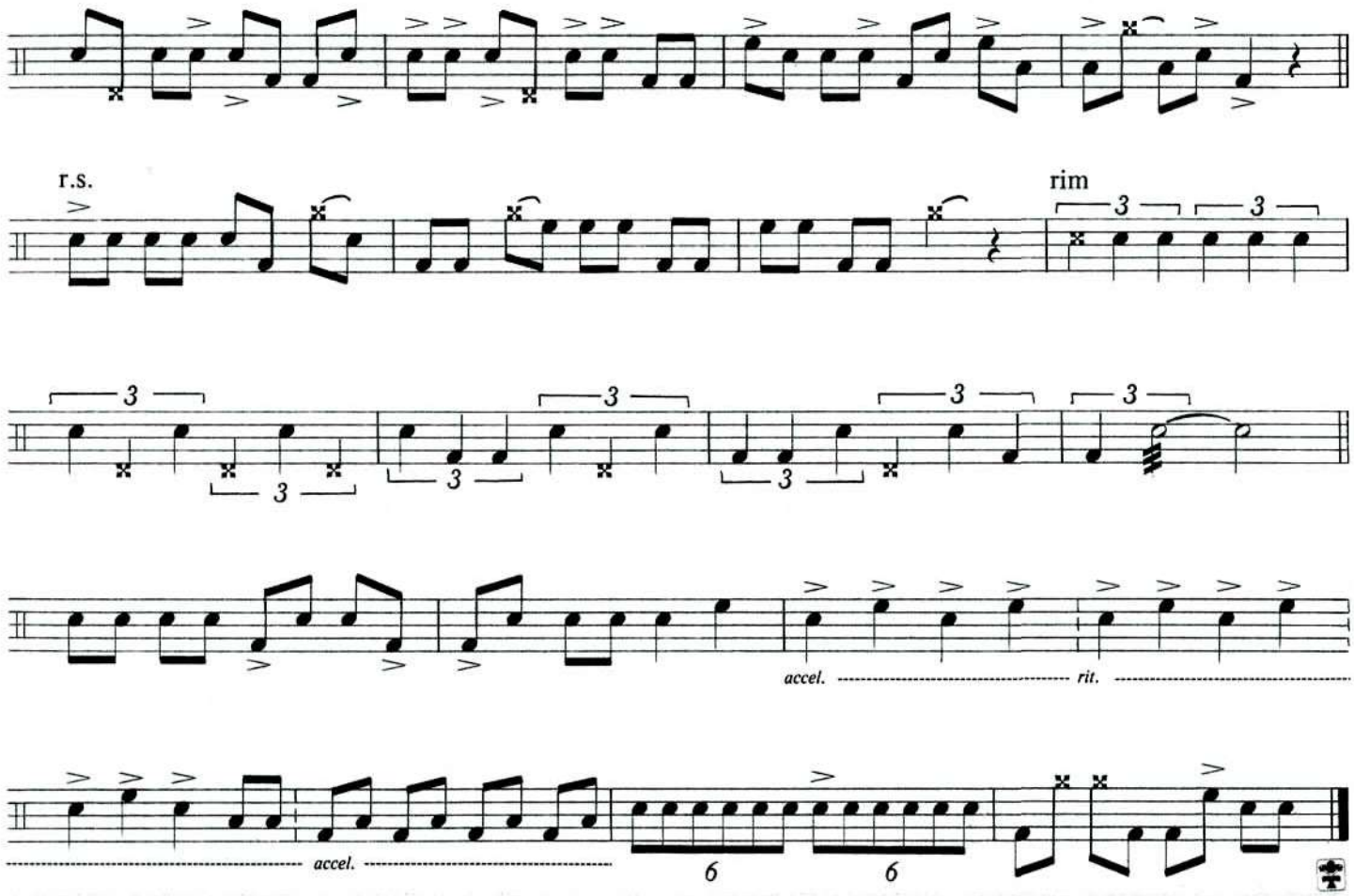
Tony's playing on "Seven Steps To Heaven," from *Four and More,* bears much resemblance to the style of Philly Joe. His ride cymbal is the basic timekeeping device, and he comps eagerly with snare, bass and hi-hat. Nevertheless, several characteristics distinguish Williams' playing from that of his predecessors. First, he plays on the very front edge of the beat, lending a feeling of forward motion to the music. And although his ride cymbal still swings, the rhythmic pattern is closer to straight eighth notes than triplets. In addition, he is very free with his ride patterns, often changing within the space of a few measures:



Williams' solo on "Seven Steps To Heaven" depicts both his roots and his own progress, with much repetition of figures, cross-rhythms, phrasing over the bar line and the use of space. Despite the free nature of the solo, Williams follows the form—if not in exact time, at least in melodic conception. His solo is two choruses long, with much stretching of the time. In the following transcription (first chorus), note that although Williams often phrases across bar lines, he always effects some change of texture, however subtle, to mark the form.

Tony Williams advanced the jazz drummer's art to a new plateau. Incredibly energetic and exciting, Williams' recordings with Miles will remain influential for years to come.





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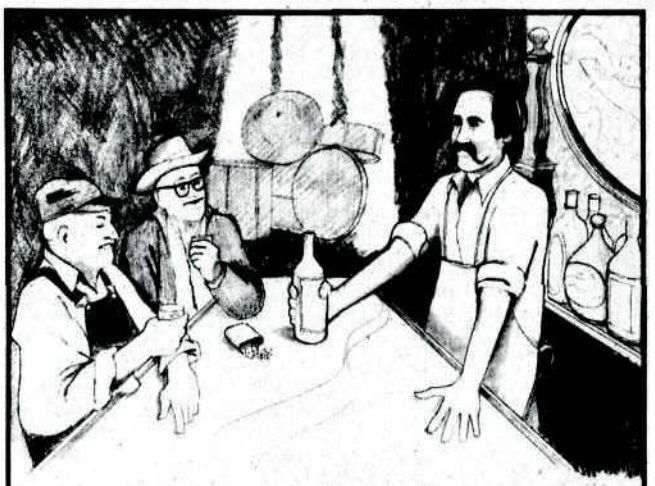

Does anybody remember Woozie Fisher?

"Woozie Fisher? Yeah, I remember Woozie Fisher. Played the big bands behind Fats Walrus."

"Naw, he was with that other fella, what's his name?"

"Duke Wellington."

"Yep, sure played a mean saxophone, ole Woozie!"

"You're nutty as a fruitcake! Woozie was a drummer if there ever was one!"

"Oh yeah! Played hard and sweated a lot. I remember the night his sticks slipped out of his sweaty hands and cleared the dance floor!"

"Yeah! And after that he swore he'd figger a way to hang on to his sticks."

"Ain't he still at it, sandin' the shafts of red hickory drumsticks so other drummers can hold on to 'em?"

"Can't say as I remember."

Woozie Fisher
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by Jim Watson

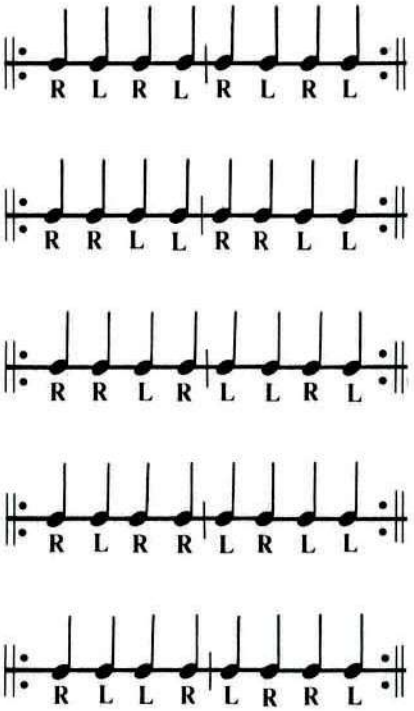
Super Slow Practice

There is a method of practicing that can help you improve your time, your feel, and your concentration, yet it's usually thought to be for beginners only. This is the method *of super slow* practicing, and contrary to popular belief, the more technically proficient you become, the greater the benefits from this method.

Super slow practicing involves consciously playing whatever material you're practicing at such a speed that each individual stroke can be concentrated on. This does not include the type of slow practicing you do to learn something new. Rather, it involves taking material that you're familiar with and playing each note with a concentrated effort. In effect, it's like putting your playing under a microscope, enabling you to smooth and refine all aspects of your performance.

This concept can be applied to nearly all facets of drumming, and I'll illustrate how it can be used for snare technique and drumset control.

For snare technique, try playing some basic sticking patterns such as singles, doubles, and paradiddles (the first page of *Stick Control* is perfect), but instead of trying to play them as fast as possible, set your metronome at 80 beats per minute, and play one stroke on each beat. Don't kid yourself! This takes a lot of concentration. You know you're doing it right when you're so *in the pocket,* you can't hear the metronome.



Practice this exercise with a variety of stickings and don't stop when you change from one to the next. It should be a steady, constant flow. You should do each sticking for about one minute before moving onto the next. Also, try using a different tempo each day. You want to get in a groove—not a rut. Vary your speed from 60bpm to 120bpm. You might also try playing the rudiments very slowly. Concentrate on each note in a roll or a ruff. Be as *precise* as possible.

For drumset, a really good exercise is to play a quick samba pattern at two-thirds or one-half the speed you normally do. You'll probably hear things you never heard before. Speed can hide a multitude of sins. Make sure that whenever you play two notes together, they're exactly together; no sloppy playing allowed. Also make sure that your accented notes really sound accented, compared to your soft, ghost notes. David Garibaldi once told me that the key to anyone's style is how they accent. That means you have to concentrate on how to articulate each note you play.

Other drumset exercises that are excellent to work on are the ones that David Garibaldi has used in his *Rock Perspectives* column. The trick to making these *sound,* is to make sure that each sixteenth note is in exactly the right place. Play each of these exercises for two or three minutes at about two-thirds the normal speed. Make each note lock in.

These exercises are just a beginning. The idea is to develop your own exercises based on these concepts. One of the best ways to improve your playing is through a free exchange of ideas with other drummers. Everyone has valuable ideas.

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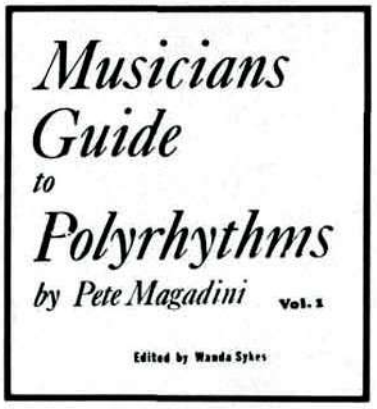

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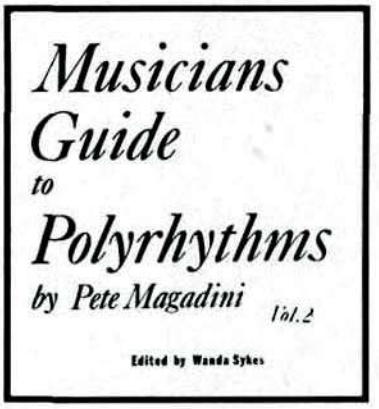

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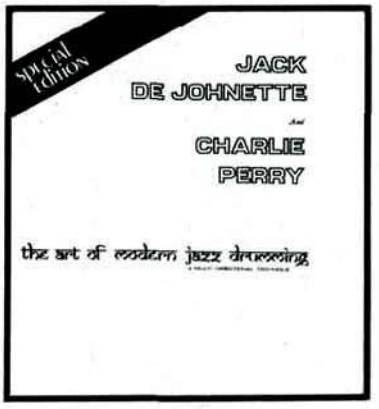

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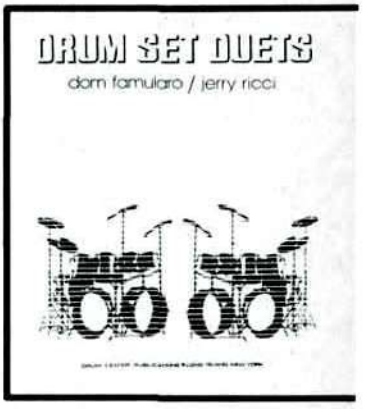

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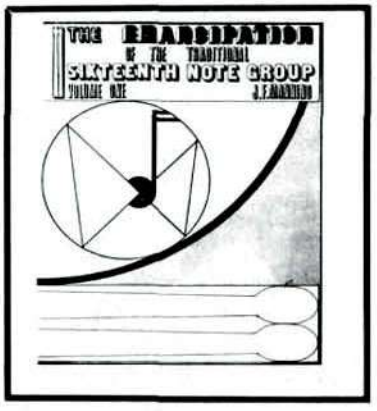

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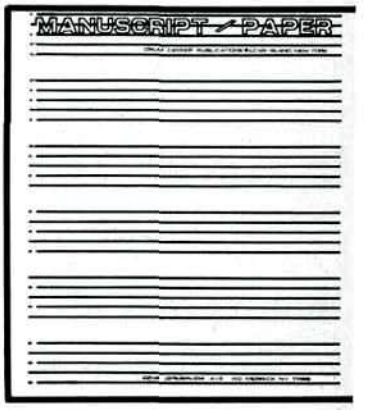

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DEALERS INQUIRIES INVITED

Vic

Photo by John McEuen

One can't help but be intrigued by a drummer whose playing experiences range from Ted Nugent to Crystal Gayle, who grew up in Florida, lived in Detroit with Nugent, and now lives in Nashville. With musical interests as diverse as Weather Report to Little Feat, Vic Mastrianni is now able to taste variety playing with one of the longest working bands in the industry, the Dirt Band. The Dirt Band treats their audiences to an eclectic selection of musical styles, from good ol' rock 'n' roll to down-home bluegrass, and everything in between. And for the past year and a half, Vic has been adeptly supplying their drum beat.

"I love this band," he smiled, seated in his San Diego hotel room. "From the beginning, I wanted to be in a band that played good all-American rock 'n' roll tunes, had good vocals and happy songs. This band is perfect. The Dirt Band has gone through more changes than a lot of groups have, but I think this band can do some country music and bluegrass stuff and still be considered contemporary. Groups like Alabama and Charlie Daniels emerged doing country music with rock and I think those are the people the Dirt Band will appeal to, only this band is so much more sophisticated in attitude, image and appearance. This band offers me the expression to play the kind of drums I want to play, although there are still a lot of things I haven't yet done with them that I can do. There's a lot of freedom there, though, and I think they like my ideas."

Having been through several drummers in the past few years, founding member Jimmie Fadden described what the Dirt Band expects from their drummer, and why Vic fits the bill: "What we need is someone aggressive and consistent. Vic is persistent about his job and stays after it. He seems to be very happy playing this music, whereas the other drummers didn't necessarily want to play our kind of music."

Mastrianni formed his strong musical opinions at a young age. Watching his father and uncle working as jazz musicians, Vic found that genre of music too confining, with "white shirts and no soul," as he put it. His father, however, saw to it that Vic had formal lessons from Leo Shurpa in West Palm Beach, Florida, from ages nine to high school graduation.

"My dad wanted me to be an Ed Shaughnessy, and that meant reading. Beyond that, he said, if I wanted to be a rock 'n' roll drummer, it didn't matter, but I'd have to learn to read. I didn't totally agree with that, but I did learn a lot and could see where it was really helping me in school bands. I also learned a lot from a drummer by the name of Duffy Jackson. Duffy was a child prodigy and when we graduated high school, he went on with Liza Minelli, Lionel Hampton and Count Basie. He was the same age as I, but he taught me a lot because he was getting lessons from Buddy Rich and he was a powerhouse on drums even as a little kid."

After high school graduation and playing with the top local band, Vic moved to New York in 1971 to fulfill a record deal with a group of local guys who called themselves Shotgun Messenger. After the all-too-familiar horror stories of broken promises, the record was never released. But the band did benefit Vic in that they had opened for the Amboy Dukes on a couple of occasions, and the following year, Ted Nugent requested that Mastrianni take over the drum seat Joe Vitale had just vacated.

"I listened to the demo tapes with Vitale on them and thought, 'This guy is hot! I don't know if I can do this.' It was slightly intimidating because they seemed as though they were more seasoned than I, and Vitale was doing things on the drums that I didn't really have control over yet. It seemed so easy for him, but I got hold of it finally, and when all was said and done, I didn't really have a problem keeping tastefulness in that kind of music. I was already into stuff like Billy Cobham, and as far as being powerful, I think Cobham is more powerful than Nugent is. And there is a guy named Cozy Powell who had started playing with Jeff Beck. The way those two guys played is exactly what I wanted to do in drumming. So I just took it into that gig and that's the way I played it. The fact that the bass player was also into more funk jazz helped, plus, Nugent is funky. He grew up in Detroit and he knows all about black music, if anybody does, but he's made the decision to be what he is. Basically, though, I found it real easy to be tasty and to use the power for something exciting. I was intrigued by the power because it gave me a chance to really let loose. The first few times you let loose it's like a wild stallion. Once I got control, I found that there was something there and I could still play soft, but if I really wanted to lay into it, I had opened a new door that hadn't been there before. Some drummers, I think, do not understand the power. Sometimes they use it in the wrong places and that's why sometimes people say that some drummers are too loud, or it sounds like they're building a house. It's just that they don't really know where to take the song.

"When I left Nugent in '75,1 was ready to go see a shrink, though. I thought I had lost my chops. In the beginning, I thought I was really getting better and better and had full intentions of keeping it that way. But the more popular the band got and the

by Robyn Flans

Mastrianni

more touring we did—opening for Kiss and ZZ Top and stuff—I'd just go out there and play two hours of one, solid, hard-rock beat, just as fast as I could go and as hard as I could play. The finesse was going away after a while. As he'd up our salary, though, and things got better, it just seemed worth sticking around for. But after a while, I definitely felt as if I were loosing my grip."

After leaving Nugent, he joined some friends who had moved to Nashville, and soon found himself joining them to back Buffy St. Marie.

"At that point, I couldn't even play with just one bass drum. I had started playing double bass at 15 or 16 after seeing Carmine Appice's set up, and I never really got away from that. All of a sudden, in 1975, which was many, many years later, I had to completely change. I had played with two for so long that I mixed all my beats between two bass drums and it was the only way I could play. I had learned to play so powerfully and hard that I had to use two bass drums or I would have had a heart attack. I just didn't have enough control with one foot. Those guys were real patient with me because it really took me a few months before I got a grip on opening and closing a hi-hat. It was almost like starting over, but I had to learn it because all the studios and all the drummers played this specific set up, whereas I had always played eleven-piece sets."

Some work with J.J. Cale followed, as well as some touring with Tracy Nelson who he had met through a songwriter by the name of Mac Gayden. During this time, Vic also worked on Gayden's ABC album which was cut down at Criteria Studios, giving him the opportunity to experiment extensively in a recording situation unlike the two albums he had done with Nugent *[Call of the Wild and Tooth, Fang & Claw},* which consisted primarily of straight ahead playing and little overdubbing.

Returning to Nashville, he worked some with Jack Clements, and did whatever studio work came along, but knew he could never be happy focusing exclusively on session work.

"I stayed in Nashville because it had the air about it, mainly because of my friends, that we could just put a band together. Peace and Quiet [the band that backed Buffy St. Marie] was the motivation to stay, more than anything. My two friends had already gotten in with studios and we had unlimited time to cut anything we wanted. I was trying to get abreast of it and learn more about the scene in Nashville because I didn't dislike country music. My motivation was primarily to make it in the business, and I wasn't about to let country music stand in my way. Half of what Jack Clements did was country music. He'd have someone like Waylon or John Prine there and it was country as hell. I'd be the only unseasoned player in the bunch. After eight years in Nashville and the studios, I've definitely gotten a hold on what it is and what it requires. I find it very limiting. You'd better be ready to sit back and do only that and have had all your wild oats sowed. When I first saw what was going on there, I was intrigued by it, but I also saw that thing I had seen back with my father—the jazz straight-laced feel and its lack of expression—which I didn't like. The first couple of weeks I was there, I talked to Larrie Londin, who was so generous and open and invited me to sessions. What I thought was, 'If I were like him, maybe I could to that. But right now I really want to be doing something with a band that has the feeling I want to portray—not what a producer wants to portray.' "

Peace and Quiet, a band Vic described as "similar to the Dirt Band minus the banjo," was putting an album together independently in 1977 when Crystal Gayle called and asked them if they would become her back-up band. "It was my first experience on a tour bus with a Nashville country singer and that was interesting. It was great being with my friends, and in retrospect, I think that's part of what scared me about Michigan with Nugent—being up there by myself. With my friends playing country music, I could too. I didn't feel out of place. We had a good time and we could talk about it after the show."

After two albums [*When I Dream* and *Crystal],* Crystal replaced the entire band with older studio musicians. Vic conjectured, "I think we pushed her a little too far, musically, sometimes. We even got her to cut a reggae song once in the studio," he laughed.

But again, the right time and the right place paid off. Both the Dirt Band and member John McEuen, in his solo act, had opened for Gayle. Upon changing drummers, the Dirt Band asked Vic to join, only six months after he'd left Gayle.

"I took it as a challenge that they had been through several drummers in the past. I also like the fact that the Dirt Band has been around as long as it has because I feel that makes for an even better opportunity. Look at all these struggling bands like J. Geils, Steve Miller, Bob Seger, and even Nugent, who for years had mediocre albums out and minimal record sales, and then one day, pow! I think the Dirt Band has just as much, if not more, opportunity and lot more capability than most for turning out monster hits. At this point, I'd like to know what reasons there are *not* to stay. That's how I look at it. I've already looked at things the other way, like with Nugent where I felt, 'Oh, he won't make it. He's been around for years and if he were going to make it, he already would have.' That's one of the reasons I can't look at things like that anymore. Obviously, I was wrong. I left about two years before he skyrocketed, so I'm able to take those slaps in the face from all those old groups. I just have to look at it as if it's a matter of time."

Although bluegrass is certainly not the extent of what the Dirt Band plays, it is, perhaps, considered one of the most difficult styles to master. Vic says, however, "I've always wondered why people say bluegrass is hard to play. When I first moved, playing with brushes was one of the things I did best. Somehow, I could play anything with brushes. I realized that from being able to play so fast with Nugent, I had learned to play quick and snappy. I was able to relax even at a fast tempo and play very steady. A lot of drummers just can't get over the tempo and I think they find they can't keep up with it. Country audiences don't clap on two and four, they clap on one and three, which is totally opposite from rock 'n' roll. When you clap on one and three, you actually should almost pick it up a little bit, because they're clapping in a strange spot and it makes it more fun. When they're clapping on two and four, it's got to be right in there because a two and four clapper is going to know if you're rushing. With bluegrass, the faster the beat gets, the more exciting it

continued on next page

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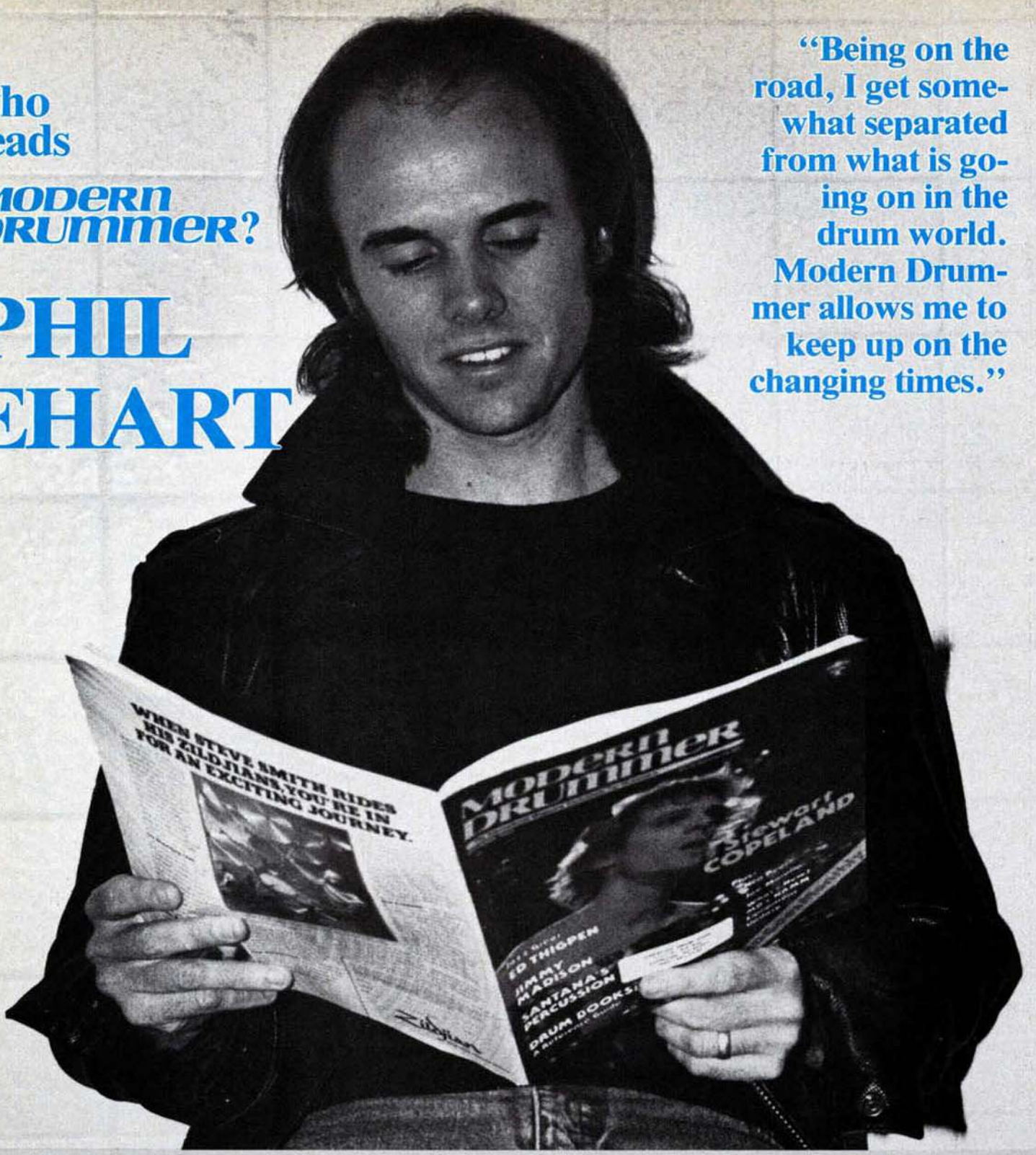

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gets and that's what the people like. That's not to say you should rush, but it's important to keep it exciting.

"I don't think the drummer in a bluegrass situation is there to stand out like a solo instrument. But what he *can* provide can be important as an underlying blanket of rhythm that provides more for the banjo player to play off of. Brushes on a snare drum can really add to a rhythm so the other instruments can concentrate more on chords and tonal value and the bass player doesn't have to slap so much. As long as the drummer is doing what he's supposed to, I think it can have its place. I don't mind being in the background when it comes to that because I don't enjoy playing anything that doesn't fit anyway. With the Dirt Band, there's only a quarter of the show that I do with brushes, though, which is mostly on the fast songs, except for 'Ripplin' Waters,' which is a ballad. Actually, that is the hardest to do because it is the exact same beat as the real fast bluegrass things, except I'm playing it real slow. The pattern you use for a bluegrass thing is the right hand playing the beat and the left playing staggered upbeats. When you do that at a slow pace, you've really got to listen to the vocal and forget what you're doing so you can stay with the vocal. I sing the song while I'm playing. On most things, the less I think about what I'm playing, the better I play."

Throughout the years, various members such as guitarist Jeff Hanna, harmonica player Jimmie Fadden and bassist Jimmy Ibbotson supplied the drums for the band. But Vic's open and receptive nature does not allow that to inhibit him. In fact, quite the contrary: "I'll always give them the chance to suggest and I'll play whatever it is they want to hear. That doesn't mean that that'll be the final word, but if Jeff asks me to play something, I'll play it for him because that's the only way all of us are going to find out if the idea was worth trying. Some drummers are pretty closed-minded about that and they get defensive, but I figure that if I've got my own ideas, I'm not going to forget them. I always like to listen, and actually, most of Jeffs ideas are worth listening to. He's real aware of drums since he likes them and dabbles in them. Also, maybe sometimes I am lost for what to play in a song and I welcome that input. Fadden knows a lot of that cajun stuff, and I while I had played regular straight country, I had never done a lot of actual cajun music. Fadden plays drums on 'Diggy Diggy Lo,' which has a weird French beat. The snare drum does a little bit more rhythm than just one and three and plays like double beats. I like what he does on that and it has enabled me to learn how to do it so that when we do 'Bayou Jubilee,' which is in that vein, it comes easier."

His desire to experiment with different musical ideas, however, is satisfied in his time off from the Dirt Band, and he plays bass and piano well enough to compose. He continues to stay as involved with as many Nashville projects as possible, working with a band which includes members of Jimmy Buffet's back-up band, writing with the Allman Brothers' co-producer, and doing whatever studio work comes along. "Sometimes that's difficult because I'm in and out of town so much, so I tend to work mainly in conjunction with songwriters who seem to be more flexible," he explained. But it all adds to the total picture in which Vic feels he has the best of all worlds.

"I would say that one of my favorite bands right now is the Police. That's the kind of drumming I'd like to be doing more of. But I really have a wide variety of what I like and I can definitely sit down and enjoy what I do with the Dirt Band and not feel like I'm missing anything because I can go home and do that, and I do. There are a few bands I work with in Nashville. Nashville is one of those towns where you can play in five groups at once, and each one has a totally different attitude. One group, the Nerve, is very progressive and everybody steps out and does solos. The Dirt Band is something I'm proud of, though, and it has a little more business attached to it. These guys are a little more serious, and while maybe those other bands deserve to make it, I don't think that's what they're after. If I had to choose between one and the other, I'd be much more happy, much more satisfied, and much less frustrated by playing with the Dirt Band than I would be playing music I supposedly really love where I'm not doing anything and not getting anywhere. I couldn't even begin to put that in front of this. I don't feel that it's the least bit of a compromise. Sure, there's more you want to do, but you can't have everything, so you have to choose what you like the most. This is what I'd rather have the most when it comes right down toil."

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Mark Hogue *continued from page 19*

and everything. It sounded funky because of the amount of bleed.

MS: You're not worried about blowing a mic'?

MH: Not so much, no. I wouldn't take them on the road. They're beautiful microphones and belong in nice places.

MS: What do you like to use for recording jazz drums?

MH: It depends on the kit. A Sennheiser *441* works very well on snare drums in deference to an *SM-57.* It's a little clearer sounding; a little brighter. For bass drums, I like an Electro-Voice *RE-20.* That works sometimes when the AKG *D-12* won't. A Shure SM-57 will work sometimes when either of the other two won't.

MS: Here comes a loaded question: We're talking about bebop drummers and jazz drummers, and even some rock 'n' roll drummers now are using two heads.

MH: That drives me nuts. See, there's an easy way and there's a hard way. You can take a drumkit and you can do stock things to it. Give them a stock sound and put microphones on them and they'll sound like cans. If you're going for something other than that stock sound, it takes a great deal of experimentation. Experimentation is the idea. Keep trying things until you find one that works for you. There are no rules. There are certain things that are easy to do and certain things that are harder to do. Let a soundman and a drummer work together so they have a concept of what they want. Then trying to reproduce it is just a matter of trial and error.

MS: How do you feel about above and below snare miking?

MH: I've tried it. I've heard it sound real good in studios, but I've yet to hear it sound real good live.

MS: Would you use the same mic' on top as on the bottom?

MH: That's what I've seen done and that's what I've experimented with myself. I've tried it top and bottom where one microphone is out of phase with the other. I've tried them top and bottom going in separate channels with separate EQ, both in phase and out. The best sounding snare drum I get is miked from the top, two fingers away from the rim; two fingers off the head.

MS: How about hi-hat miking?

MH: I like a cardioid condensor mic'. The one I'm using now is a *CE-1* capsule on an AKG power handle. It's the same capsule that's on a *451.* I like to mike hi-hats near the edge of the cymbals rather than over the middle of the cymbal.

MS: I've seen them mike hi-hats where the mic' is actually on a slant, tilted away.

MH: The idea is to get a bright, clear transparent sounding hi-hat rather than a metallic clank. As a cardioid patterned microphone, different frequencies have different pickup patterns within the cardioid pattern. If you point the mic' right on it, you get a certain characteristic. If you point it to the side, you get some cancellation from the back of the microphone that takes out some of the clunkiness and gives you the crispy edge.

See, you're dealing with a P.A. system. It's a little give and take. You have to sacrifice some things to get other things. A lot of times you have to sacrifice a real big, full drum sound so you can hear something else in the band. Layering becomes the real trick at that point with the P. A.

The next thing that's happening—and I haven't had the opportunity to experiment with it a great deal—is pressure-zone mic's. The PZM. They're turning up everywhere. I'm told you can mike a drumkit with two pressure-zone mic's: one on the floor in front of the kit, and one overhead. I've heard it on tape and it sounds phenomenal.

MS: It works.

MH: Live, you've got a lot of bleed problems. Other instruments blowing into those microphones, and separation is critical again so you can layer things in a P.A. application.

MS: I had one date where they did that and I thought they were kidding, until I heard the playbacks and they were so true. It re-

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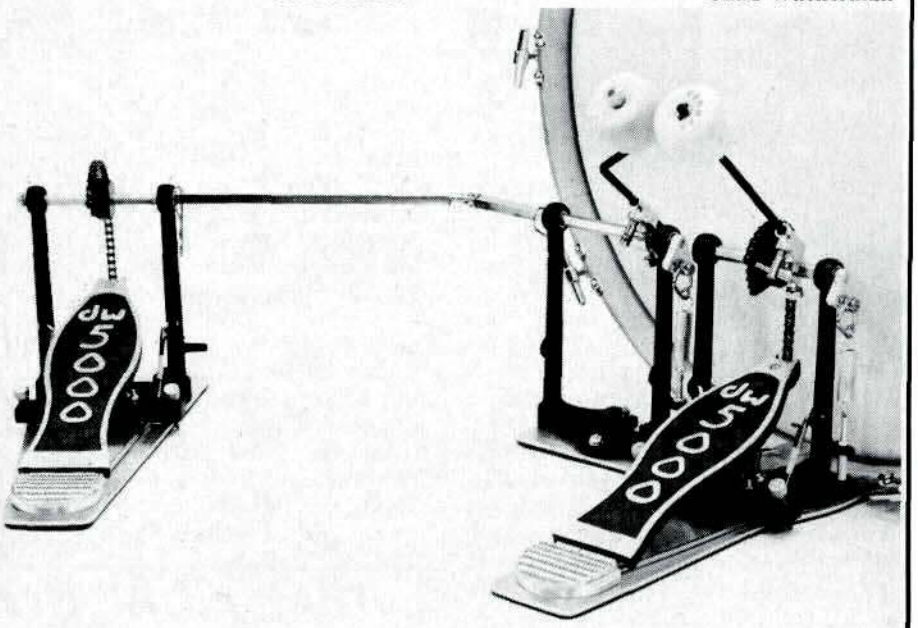

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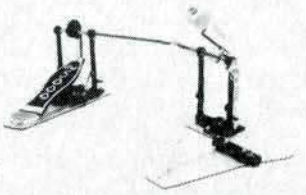

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ally sounded like my drums.

MH: I want to get into using PZMs for overhead miking. One on a 12" x 12" plexiglass plate over the kit. Because with overhead miking, ideally you shouldn't get just cymbals, but you should get the ambiance of the tom-toms and the snare drum.

MS: That's a problem because usually your cymbals are the hottest, so when you're playing your toms there's nothing happening.

MH: That's the idea of putting microphones on them in the beginning. Different situations require different things. I talked to you about using a *DS-35* or a *PL-95* Electro-Voice which is a vocal mic' primarily. It's a very, very tight pattern. No proximity effect. For orchestra things, where I want to eliminate as much bleed as is absolutely possible, the *DS-35* works very well because it picks up what's in front of it. So if you use them on tom-toms you can actually put more gain in your tom-toms or have more flexibility as far as EQ and layering in the kit and less leakage. But it's not as easy to get a good drum sound as it is with a *421.*

Speed is another consideration. When you're doing P.A. systems for one nighters, you don't have forty-five minutes to spend on the drums every day to make them sound right. Whenever I do one-nighters I like to go with a kit that is basically a dead sounding kit.

MS: Do you mind bottom heads on the toms?

MH: Not if the drummer can eliminate the overtones. That's what gets me. Because if you take the ring out with EQ, you take so much else out with it. You take the whole tone of the drum away.

MS: I think *Deadringers* sound real good.

MH: It's just so much easier to blow the bottom heads off, or cut holes in them. If you get a drummer who likes the response of a two-headed kit and you take the bottom heads off—suddenly you're hitting two pieces of cardboard. If you cut a hole in the bottom of the head—varying degrees with varying sizes—you still get some of that hydraulic effect off the bottom head and eliminate the rings. *Deadringers* have cured a lot of that, and *Duraline* heads as well. We had a drummer in England who had all *Duraline* heads on his kit. Phenomenal. No rings. They sounded like cannons.

MS: If you had to pick one mic', if you could only have *one* to use on everything for the drumkit, what would it be?

MH: That'd be tough. Probably Sennheiser *441s* or *42Is.* Because of the clarity.

MS: What about Shure SM-57s?

MH: They work fine. I have a friend who owns J. Geils' P.A. system. He uses all *SM-57&* for everything. His system is designed to be very flat. He EQs his P.A. around the response of an *SM-57.* He knows exactly what the parameters of his microphones are so he has total control of what's coming out. I approach it a little differently. I like to put the right microphone on the right thing and don't EQ it drastically. As you start to EQ things drastically, you start to induce phase shifting in your signal and things start sounding real muddy; you lose clarity and tone. So keep it real straight ahead, run the right mic' in the right place and keep it flat.

There are all kinds of new things coming out, too. The Countryman *EM-101* is a little bitty clip-on condenser mic'. You just clip it onto the rim and they sound wonderful.

MS: State of the art.

MH: State of the money. That's where it's at. Big bucks.

MS: It's the same as anything else. By the time you buy it and get it home, there's already something that's superceded it.

Michael DeLugg *continuedfrom page 21*

crophones is that they're very sensitive. It'd be like sticking your ear right up against a cymbal or a tom-tom.

MS: Do you ever mike snare drums above and below?

MD: I generally don't find it necessary. We did that on Barry's *IfI Should Love Again* album. We did it on "Let's Hang On" and a couple of other up-tempo tunes, because

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we were looking for a little more "crack" out of the snares. So, I added a mic' underneath the snare.

MS: Do you prefer a deep snare drum?

MD: Yeah. I like a fat, ballsy snare drum. I like a snare drum that takes over the world. My reward is that every time I do a session, the players come into the room and the first thing I hear is, "Great drum sound, Michael." That makes me happy.

I don't do the same thing exactly the same way every time. It really depends on the tune. I don't believe in sitting there listening to drums for a half hour without knowing what the tune is.

MS: I'd like to touch on this. I was in a state-of-the-art studio once and they took about two hours to get a drum sound, which is just exhausting for the drummer. The next day I worked on a regular session and in five minutes they had the drum sound down. For the drummer, it's really disconcerting to have to spend that much time, because your energy is gone.

MD: It's disconcerting for me. I won't just sit with a drummer. That's why I don't get called to do some of the rock 'n' roll albums, because I won't spend two hours getting a drum sound. I don't believe that it's healthy for me or the drummer or the record. I think it's the wrong approach. The approach is: What is the bass player going to do? What is the piano player going to play? What is the singer going to sing? What's going on in this record? Then I can figure out where the drums sit. Then I can say, "Hey, the foot needs a little more bottom. Can I get it out in the studio? Can we tune the foot down a little bit? Can we take some padding out or should I do it in the control room?"

MS: Do you have any hassle with drummers?

MD: No. I generally try to strike up a nice little relationship right at the outset. As soon as they hear the first playback, they know that I'm not screwing them. They know I'm trying to help them. Sometimes I'll ask a drummer to deaden one of his tom-toms a little more than he would like to. Once in a while they'll fight me on it and then they'll come in and hear the playback and hear that tom-tom spilling all over the bass and everything else and say, "Yeah, I think you're right Michael. A little more tape on that drum."

MS: Is there a favorite drumset you like to record?

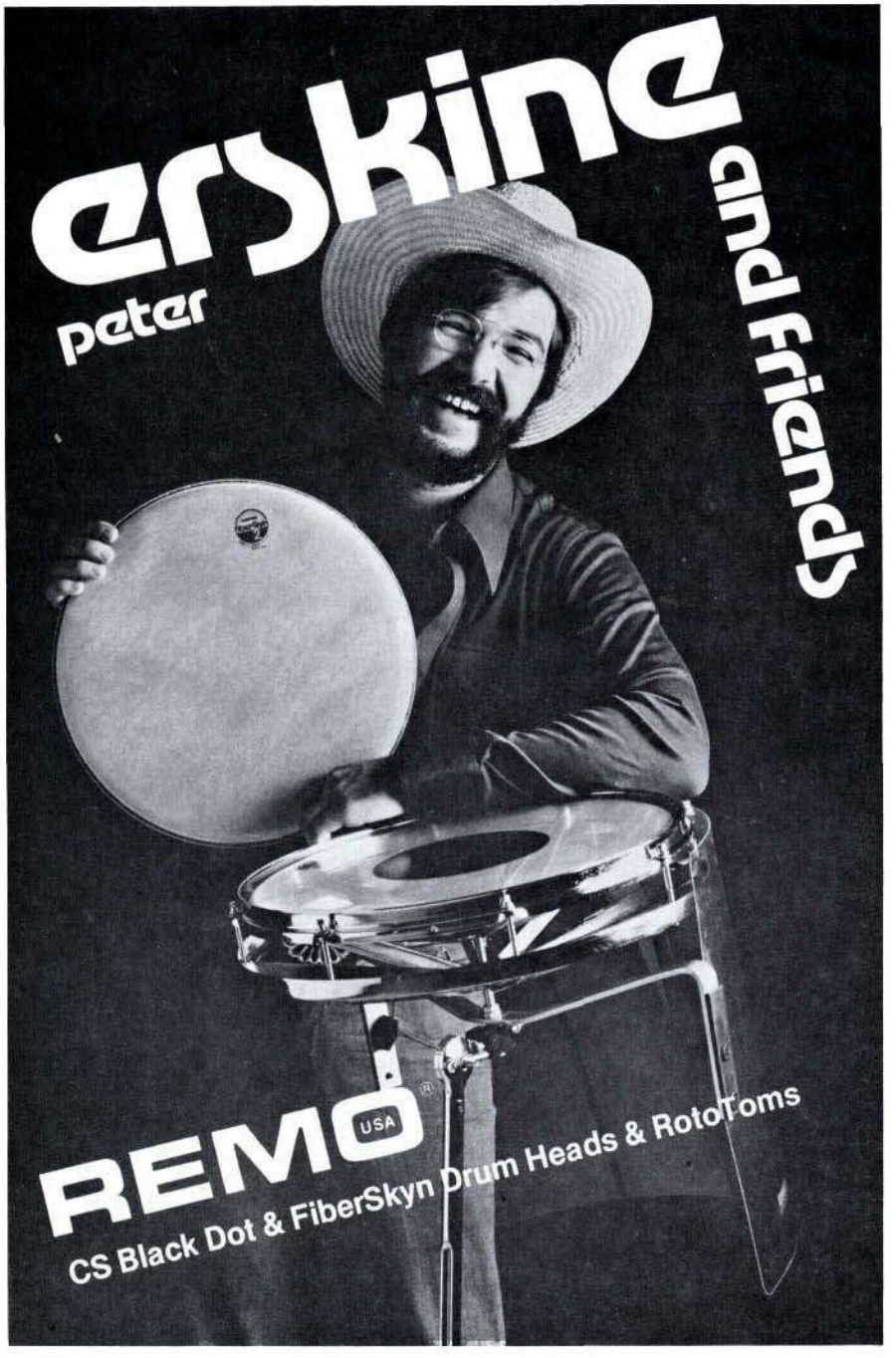
MD: There really isn't. Every day that you go in, it's different. You can get a great drum sound for one song on this kit, and walk in the next day and it's all shot to hell. It all sounds different. It all sounds wrong and everything is logically the same. Everything is set up the same, everyone swears, "No. No one's touched a microphone. No one's touched a drum." But little tiny things have happened. Overnight it got colder in the studio, or the drums got out of tune. Or the song itself changed, and changed the whole feel of the drums.

MS: Do you have any feelings about bottom heads on the toms?

MD: I generally think they're needed. I think a drummer can develop his sound better and work with me better if he's got all the facilities. It's like taking the black keys away from the piano. I think you're tying the drummer's hands if you take the bottom heads off. That's where you get a lot of your tone—from the bottom heads. A lot of guys don't realize that or can't deal with the tone, or they're using mic's they shouldn't be using, or they're trying to do it in the control room.

MS: It's disconcerting to me when I see a guy shove a microphone up inside a one-headed drum. You just don't hear it there.

MD: That's ridiculous. That would be akin to taking a tom-tom, opening up the bottom head, putting it against your ear and hitting the other side, and seeing what it sounds like. It's going to hurt the microphone, and it's going to sound like crap. Then you sit there and spend about two hours working on it to make it sound as if it had bottom heads, which is silly. You shouldn't fix things in the control room. That isn't where it's done. It's done by players out in the studio with just a little bit



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of guidance and help from the control room.

MS: From a musician's standpoint, I know if something isn't right. If a guy says, "Can you play the toms?" and I have to play the toms five or six times, I know something is wrong. I wish at that point the guy would say what was wrong, but nobody says anything. You play it five more times and still nobody says anything. Boy, that drives you crazy.

MD: You must constantly give feedback from the control room. Some of it has to be positive. You can't only say what's wrong with it. It's helpful if you say to the drummer, "Hey man, the foot and the snare are sounding great. I'm having a little bit of a problem with the toms. I'm not sure whether it's me or whether I can help you out there."

MS: Okay. But drummers and engineers who are reading this should understand that it works both ways. If there's no communication, it just makes it impossible.

MD: It's got to be a team.

MS: I don't feel intimidated. I always look at it as helpful for me if an engineer comes out and says, "Listen I've got a little problem. Could you lighten up here?"

MD: It depends on the engineer's approach. A guy can come out and go, "Hey man! What the hell are you doing with that tom-tom?" or, "Yeah, man, I put all those paper towels in that tom-tom 'cause I wanted it that way!" If an engineer comes out and does that before the session even starts, that's the wrong attitude.

MS: Have you done anything with the PZM's [Pressure-zone mic's]?

MD: Not with drums. I've been using them on piano a lot and I love them. They'd probably be good on drums because they have a very flat response. Supposedly they—the good ones, anyhow—don't change tonality. That's what we mean by a flat response. They don't change what's actually happening.

MS: You did the engineering on Dionne's big hit, "I Know I'll Never Love This Way Again." I loved the snare drum on that. Would you care to . . . ?

MD: It's a Sennheiser *441* on the snare and it's whatever I heard was necessary to do. I'm not sure exactly what I did. I may have taken out a little high mid's, I'm not sure. But it was whatever was necessary.

MS: It just hangs on.

MD: It was just a little bit of EQ. It was only what was necessary because of everything else I heard going on around it. Dionne was singing live, which was a big help. I heard her, I heard the piano, I heard the guitar. I heard everything and I imagined the strings and the background and I heard what the snare had to be. Most of the time, when I go to the mix I'm hardly EQing anything.

MS: The way you're approaching this is the way a musician would approach playing a tune, or what he would play in the tune. Where he's placing the snare drum in the mix is really crucial; almost the way a piano player would voice a chord.

MD: It's an aesthetic thing. It's not a scientific thing where you say, "You can do this and do this."

MS: It's really a form of orchestration, where everything lies in the mix.

MD: If the arranger is on top of it—as Barry always is—and if the guitarists have an idea of where they sit as far as tonality and inversions and everything else; if everybody knows where they're sitting, then the engineer should be able to get it. I did all the Kentucky Fried Chicken commercials, and there's one with Roberta Flack. It the hottest damn track and it felt great in the studio. Luckily, the film mixer who mixed it didn't lose it.

MS: He mixed it hot.

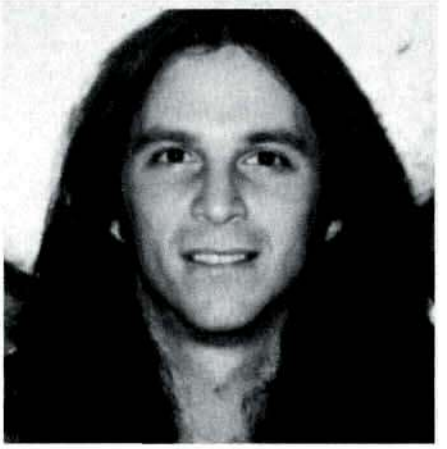
MD: He didn't lose it, and there's this drum fill that comes over your little three-inch speaker that's just great!

MS: Are there any drummers who are favorites for you?

MD: A lot of drummers are favorites. I love working with Allen Schwartzberg in New York and Rick Marotta, Chris Parker, Steve Jordan, and I'm probably forgetting a couple of other guys who I love.

MS: Do you like working with Gadd?

MD: Steve and I used to work a lot together. I love working with Steve. I haven't seen him in years. We did "The Hustle"



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and all of Van McCoy's stuff together. Rick Marotta was also on those records. Ed Greene is wonderful. Rick Schlosser is superb. They're probably my two favorites on the West Coast. I haven't worked with a lot of drummers out here unfortunately.

The bottom line is: There aren't any secrets. There really aren't.

MS: You'd be surprised. We asked engineers to be a part of this who said, "Hey, I'm not giving away *my* secrets to anybody."

MD: I used to think that years and years ago. I worked for Mediasound for eight years. I've been freelancing for about four or five years. I used to think I didn't want to give away my secrets and then I realized there aren't any secrets. It's *me!* I'm the secret. Just like the musician is the secret. It's a thing that happens. Once in a great while it doesn't happen—but not often.

Armin Steiner *continued from page 21*

cial" sound. In those days we were feeling our way along, experimenting.

While I marvel at some of the sounds the younger engineers get, it's not always in relation to what else is in the music.

MS: It's very artifical. What the drums sound like now aren't really what drums sound like live. Many times, what I hear back is so flat and dead.

AS: It comes down to environment. We've put ourselves into this ballpark because of multi-tracks. I must say that straight ahead because primarily everybody wants separation. They want to post-produce music. It must always be done after the fact rather than at the same time. I was certainly somewhat responsible for multi-track. But I never thought it would go as far as it did, and now it's going beyond what I ever thought it would go to with the double and triple machines that they're using with all these tracks. I really think it's totally unnecessary.

MS: Well, it kind of does away with the concept of musicians.

AS: I think there's a place for everything and I'm not trying to put down that technique. It certainly has worked extremely well, commercially. But it's not as thrilling as hearing something happen with a little air around it. Some of the wonderful "direct-to-disc" recordings are spectacular in that effect. That's because they backed off enough to give the drummer the respect that he should have in the way that he sounds, rather than what the engineer thinks the drums should sound like.

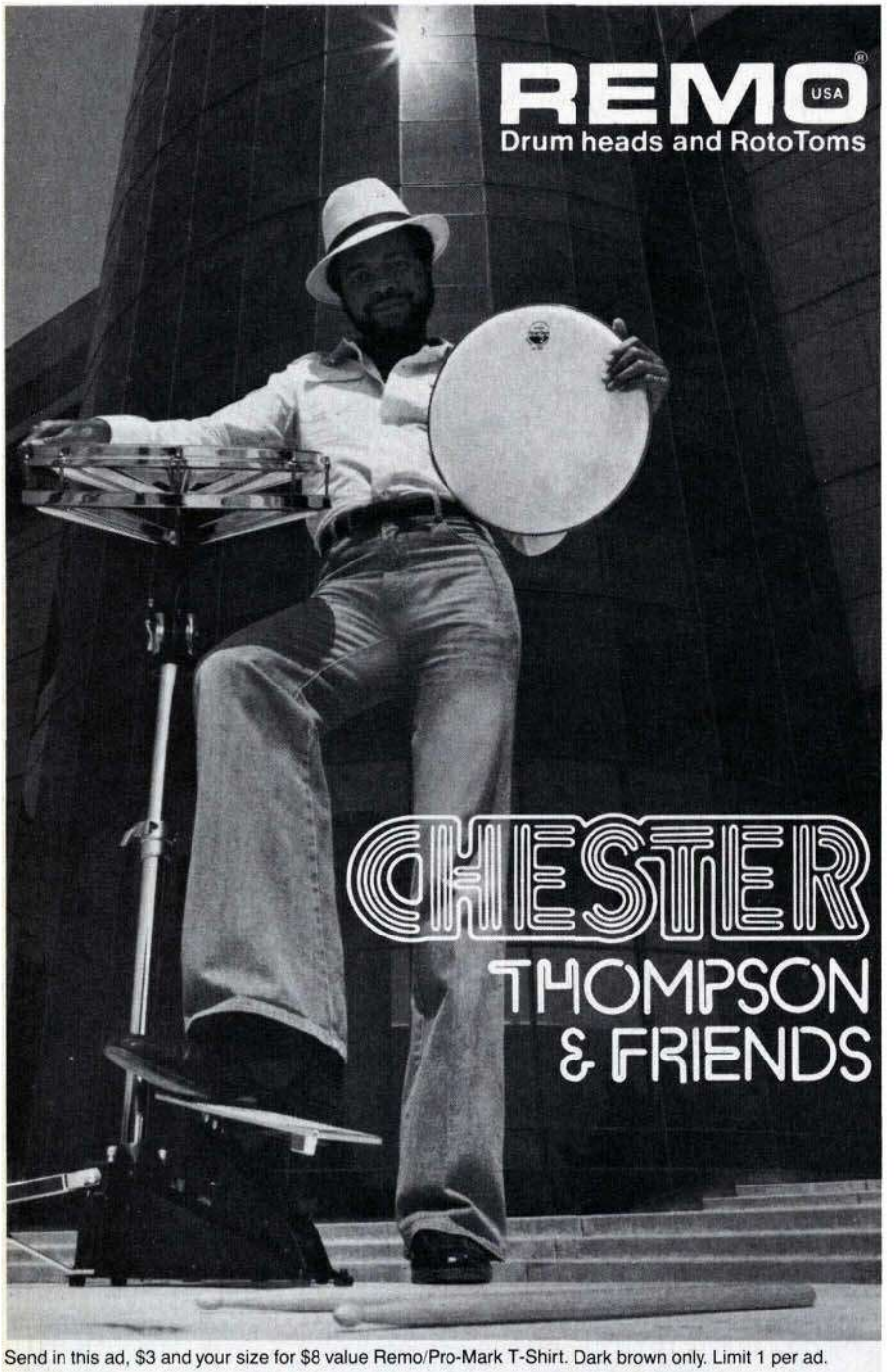
I've always preferred to record live with a big rhythm section and a large orchestra. There's something that happens with all the spillage which makes a record sound very large. I recorded all the Helen Reddy records live at Western Studio One, which was one of the best rooms to record live orchestras. Johnny Guerin was the drummer on most of those records. He came from a jazz background, yet there was something that happened. If you listen to the drums close in a room like that, they may not sound as good as some other "commercial" drummer, but when they exploded in the room, it was one of the most thrilling things to listen to because it really drove the music.

MS: That's John. He could play on a trash can. He just has that spark.

AS: He has a gift. There's no question about that. All the small studios that have sprung up where they record maybe just bass and drums, and then add the guitar and piano, some of the stuff comes out sounding really good.

Letting the music dictate what I do has always been my motivation. The only time we really had other thoughts was when we did some of the early Motown records. We were creating snare drums. We were taking them and tuning them way, way down and, all of a sudden, the bass drum became the most prominent part of that. All of a sudden we started to accent certain things which, certainly in the beginning of rock 'n' roll, were not present. Then the British picked it up and took it even further.

At the time we were using Hal Blaine and Earl Palmer, and in many cases we had both Hal and Earl. And sometimes three basses. In fact, a typical rhythm section



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consisted of Hal, Earl, Ray Pullman was playing bass and Bill Pittman was playing a Dan-Electro bass.

There was a great similarity between the room in Motown and the room out here. We did a lot of records with the Supremes, Marvin Gaye, Martha and The Vandellas and all the major groups in those days. It was interesting because we were experimenting. There was no given rule. We thought, "How far can we stretch a snare drum?" or, "How far can we stretch a bass drum? How much can we get on a record to drive it? How much bass can we get on?" That was the big deal in those days.

Studios were more alive. The instruments had more tone. I keep coming back to this area of sonority and tone. The timbre of the tom-toms and snare drum—it was gigantic, and it was either directly from its own microphones, or from halfway across the room. It was all part of the same thing. Maybe more mono than stereo. We all just think of stereo drums. That's another topic of conversation that becomes interesting because sometimes the drums can get so wide that they throw you off. It's such an impact that the impact becomes greater than the music. Sometimes it can be overwhelming. In cases where it should become overwhelming, it should, but not as a steady diet for music. I don't believe that. That's why the real hip drummer is always there and maybe never there. He's always playing some little thing on the cymbals, but it's always in the perfect-spot. A person who's very good at that is Steve Gadd. I've heard some of these recordings he's made where he has an unbelievable technique for doing the kind of thing which keeps the nervous quality going. It's wonderful, the rhythms and so forth. And yet it's not obtrusive. But it's always there.

I had an opportunity to work with Grady Tate, who is certainly a giant of a drummer. I heard some things that I've heard from very few drummers, if at all.

MS: It's called taste.

AS: Jimmy Gordon. You mentioned him before. Super player. I recorded his first sit-down drum gig at my studio in the garage. He always was a great talent. Jimmy's a very special person. He's certainly been on some very great records.

MS: Last week I had two diametrically opposed studio situations. One was at a fairly new studio. It was very fancy, state-of-the-art and very posh. But there's something that turns me off about that. About three days later I did this rhythm-section date in a real small studio. A real small set of drums. And it felt great. I almost didn't have to wear headphones. I could hear the bass player and the tracks were coming back great. I felt so comfortable in that place and so uncomfortable in the other place.

AS: Don't forget, drumkits have become bigger. Now we have umpteen zillion tom-toms. I really think that the reason for all this is that you have problems with those things resonating. You hit a snare drum and you hear it in all the tom-toms, or most typically a bass drum. This way it can be better controlled. I don't think it sounds that good.

I remember Hal was the first to start this. We did a record called "The Snake" with Al Wilson, and Johnny Rivers produced it. That was the first time I'd ever seen a kit like that. It was huge! They wheeled these two huge things into the studio and I said, "My God. We don't even have enough room to put them in the corner." It was immense.

So, simple me, I just hung two microphones over the set and it sounded spectacular. Now, you take that and you put eight microphones around it and there's no way it's going to sound as good. You'll get impact but you won't get tone. That element of tone comes back at me in the course of every conversation.

MS: Well it should. Drums do have tone. What mic's do you prefer, under what circumstances?

AS: I like to do as little as possible. I like to make sure the drums have a reasonable amount of tone, that they're in proper balance, that the cymbals speak and have an air to them, and that the bass drum is appropriate for the type of music. Obviously, we change those sounds if we're doing a big band date. Most times you don't even

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hear those kind of things. This is more or less a modern technique.

I'll never forget the time I was working with Shelly Manne and I miked the bass drum. It was the kind of thing where he took the bass drum off, and during a break, put it back on the console. Very interesting because it was out of place. I didn't have much of it in but I had enough. It was a big band date. That was Shelly's way of saying, "Hey, I think it's fine just the way it is. That's the way I think it should be heard." And we continued the date under those conditions. Musically, he was right. Absolutely. It should be as simple as possible. I think we make too many complex decisions and don't put enough emphasis on where it's at. Drums are the loudest instrument in the ensemble. Drums are also the most dangerous instrument in the ensemble because they can wipe out an entire orchestra. With one note. In one fill, that's it. They can wipe out a whole string passage. Insofar as drummers are concerned, it's not easy to play with a big orchestra because you have to lay back a little bit sometimes. If you play too loud, no matter how large the studio is, it's *too* loud. Take the drums away and the orchestra is in the proper balance. So it's a big obligation to play with an orchestra and probably the single most difficult thing to do.

MS: Do you like to mike the toms or do you just like to cover it with a couple of overheads?

AS: I cover it with a couple of overheads. If it's a piece of music that requires a lot of fills, where the lower toms may get lost, I might put a mic' back aways from the instrument. But I like to stay up in the air. I use a snare drum microphone, but a very small percentage of it. Most of it's picked up from overhead.

MS: Is there any particular mic' you like for snare drums?

AS: It depends on the drummer, and what we're doing. I always use a condenser on everything with the exception of the bass drum. On that I use a Sennheiser *421* which is a dynamic.

MS: Is that your favorite?

AS: I guess so. It all depends on the emphasis of the music. I stress that because it always guides me in how to percieve what I do. I never try to put myself between the music and the composer. I always try to put it in the perspective of how he wants it to sound.

MS: Because you view it as a musician.

AS: Well, hopefully yes. Another thing that's interesting is the amount of time spent in getting so-called "drum sounds." I think that can be *so* frustrating. Whatever the drummer has in the way of technique, and his abilities, can be totally diminished.

MS: Two hours of that is mentally draining. You get a little bit tired, especially if it isn't the first date you've done that day. I don't say anything because I understand what's going on in there, but two hours is an exceptionally long time. If you can't get it in half an hour or forty-five minutes, then either something's wrong with my drums, or there's something wrong in the booth.

AS: If we take Jimmy Keltner, or Earl Palmer, or Shelly Manne, or Mark Stevens, or any of the drummers—I know how those drums are going to sound before you go into the studio. I can hear you playing. And once I've recorded, I program that. It's the same thing with a violin section. If I look out and see so many people in a section, I can predict the sound of that section. That's the responsibility of the engineer; to be able to size up the situation, to have the retention. That's part of being professional.

It's also knowing. It's remembering. If I ever record Ron Tutt, I know exactly how those drums are going to sound. I'm also very consistent with the microphones I use. I use AKG almost exclusively. I know how those microphones are going to sound over drums.

MS: Are these *414'si*

AS: No. Sometimes that. Sometimes *452's.* When I worked at Western I used Sennheiser *405's.* They're wonderful microphones. You had to pad them down a little bit because they were made for orchestral recording. But on those Helen Reddy sessions we spoke about earlier, that's all there were. There were two microphones up over Johnny Guerin, maybe five feet over the drums. People would ask, "How can you do that? How can you record like that?" I'd say, "Listen. Just listen. Just use your ears." If it doesn't work we always have options. A lot of times I'll put microphones in the section and never put them on. But if I need *2%* or 3% of that microphone—that's what I'll go for. That's something very few engineers understand. You don't have to go for that microphone full level. There may be a microphone that's fifteen feet away picking up something that just sounds good.

Take an example of a concert bass drum. If you put a microphone in front of it, it'll just pop—it's nothing. Put that microphone thirty or forty feet away and you'll hear the full sound because the low frequency waves cannot be picked up five feet or two feet away from that drum. It's got to be picked up across the room where you have a chance to complete that wave front. There are certain laws of physics that cannot be overcome.

MS: Well, why take it away and then put it back?

AS: The trouble is we don't put it back. We put maybe 50% of it back, maybe 30% of it. That's the problem. We're not really putting it back. We think we are.

MS: I'm in 100% agreement. A concert bass drum is never going to sound like a concert bass drum when you start messing with it.

AS: It can't be done. I don't think there's

Woodblocks, chimetrees, cuckoo call, drum sticks, timpani sticks, cymbals, leg rests, bongos, gongs, cowbells, rubber feet, temple blocks, tambourines, drum keys, mallets, pop gun, snare drum stands, Rototoms, muffers, crotales, tuning forks, brushes, cases, ratchets, congas, music stands, metronomes, sistrum, almglocken, tabors, maracas, stick totes, sirens. REALISTIC ROCK–Appice, STICK CONTROL–Stone, COOKBOOK–Pickering, RUDIMENTAL JAZZ–Morello, RHYTHMIC ANALYSIS–Albright, PROGRESSIVE STUDIES–Gardner, FUN WITH TRIPLETS–Rothman, PORTRAITS IN MELODY–Cirone, TRANQUILITY–Houllie, SUITE FOR SOLO VIBRAPHONE–Lepak. Woodblocks, chimetrees, cuckoo call, drum sticks, timpani sticks, cymbals, leg rests, bongos, gongs, cowbells, rubber feet, temple blocks, tambourines, drum keys, mallets, pop gun, snare drum stands, Rototoms, muffers, crotales, tuning forks, brushes, cases, ratchets, congas, music stands, metronomes, sistrum, almglocken, tabors, maracas, stick totes, sirens. REALISTIC ROCK–Appice, STICK CONTROL–Stone, COOKBOOK–Pickering, RUDIMENTAL JAZZ–Morello, RHYTHMIC ANALYSIS–Albright, PROGRESSIVE STUDIES–Gardner, FUN WITH TRIPLETS–Rothman, PORTRAITS IN MELODY–Cirone, TRANQUILITY–Houllie, SUITE FOR SOLO VIBRAPHONE–Lepak. Woodblocks, chimetrees, cuckoo call, drum sticks, timpani sticks, cymbals, leg rests, bongos, gongs,

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Unfortunately, because of the loudness and intensity of rock, in a very live studio with little absorption, it's a real problem. Everything begins to run around and you don't get clarity. I've heard some extremely exceptional recordings made in large, massive rooms. I've heard stuff done in concert halls which had a high reverberation factor. It's all in knowing what you're doing. But music has gotten louder over the years, with concerts being amplified 120-130 dbs. You'll find groups going into studios with Marshall amplifiers turned up to an ungodly level. What's the poor drummer going to do? Play as loud as he can.

MS: Yeah. It's almost at the point where you can't play loud enough.

AS: That goes for any instrument. It's hard to make dynamics. It comes back to our initial conversation of ensemble. Sometimes I'll go to a drummer and say, "You know, because of the problems I'm having in the room, if you could take it down one dynamic, and let me bring the drums up one dynamic, we'll be able to get the tone of your instrument without sacrificing anything."

Nobody loves drums more than I do. Especially in a certain perspective, with certain kinds of music. We did a classic kind of orchestration here a few weeks ago and Larry Bunker was playing. Larry is one of the great, great percussionists of all time. All the strings were doing were playing sustained passages. All Larry had to do was play time on the hi-hat. He was out there on a cliff. There was nothing else going on in the orchestra except strings and a drummer. It was phenomenal. It was this beautiful, sonorous kind of thing that if the drums weren't there, it would've worked beautifully. But, the composer just wanted this little thing going in the background. And Larry was the only time in the composition. Larry came back to me afterwards and said, "Gee, this always happens to me." On the last three or four calls with this composer, Larry's been the percussionist and he's had to deal with this. It's very difficult, but there's a man of great experience. A great jazz drummer in his day.

MS: He still is.

AS: Absolutely. Larry's a listener. He listens to everything. Not only to what *he* does, but to every instrument.

MS: Larry's the epitome of an excellent musician; a musician's musician.

AS: Another topic we've not covered is imbalance. The composer who comes in to work with an orchestra and doesn't have as much knowledge as, say, a Billy May. Now you have an orchestra that's basically out of balance. What do you do? The engineer is faced with recording something and there's nothing to balance. Let's say the composer orchestrates something that just doesn't sound. He may write a drum part which is totally unmusical, and yet that's what he wants in the score. How do you deal with that? Maybe it's time to go out and talk to the drummer and say, "Look, we're faced with a problem. We can't reorchestrate this thing." If you know the composer and you're gutsy enough, or there's a producer sitting in the booth, you can say, "Hey, this just isn't working." Those moments come up in a lot of stuff we do for TV.

Now, is the emphasis laid upon the drummer? Where are you going to place the blame? The drummer may get blamed for something that's not written properly. The engineer gets blamed because it doesn't sound right. And the producer's yelling! It doesn't always go easy.

MS: It hardly ever goes easy. You'll get a great string writer who doesn't know how to write for a rhythm section. Or he's written out *everything,* and when I look at the part I think, "Does he want this thing played like that? Does he want this, or do I have a little space here?"

AS: If you're working with an experienced drummer, I think the best thing to do is let the drummer create his own part. Or, call the drummer before the session and say, "Can you do this?" You don't have to write out everything for a *good* drummer.

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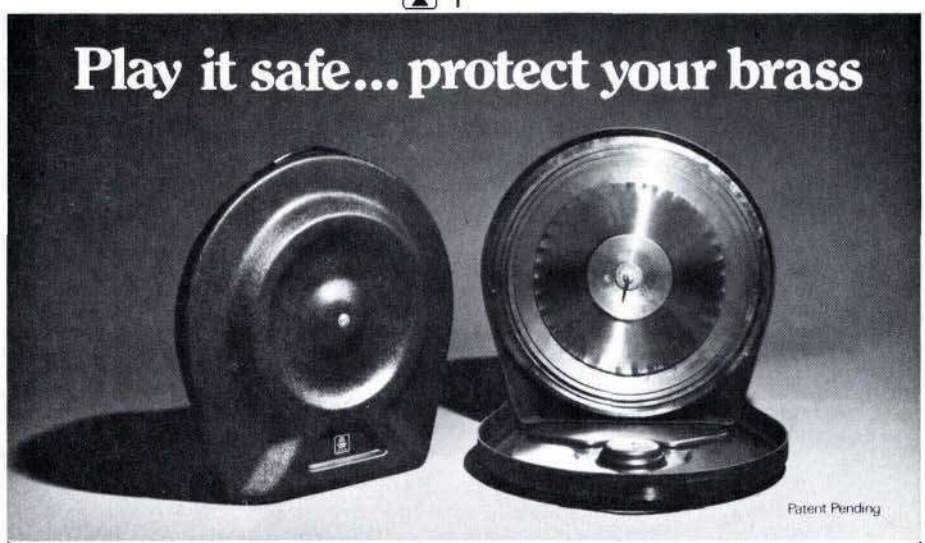

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by Chris King

Tips on Cleaning Cymbals

The drummer who's been busy practicing or lugging his set from gig to gig, and who hasn't had time to pay attention to equipment maintenance, may look up one time to notice that his cymbals aren't quite catching the light the way they used to. Their former golden shine has given way to a dirty, dusty flatness.

If you ask eight or ten drummers about cleaning cymbals, you can almost get the idea that it's some kind of mystical art. Everyone has his own favorite method, with his own favorite materials. Some drummers haven't settled on any one way, but keep looking. One poor fellow has tried everything from vinegar and salt to kerosene, and he still doesn't think he's found a satisfactory method.

While the definitive statement on cymbal cleaning does not seem possible, here are three do's and three don'ts to keep in mind:

Use soap and water. Many pros recommend such simple household cleansers as *Comet* or *Ajax,* applied with plenty of water with a cloth or mild scrub brush. Be sure and follow the grain of the cymbal when cleaning this way; use circular motions rather than scrubbing across. This will remove all dust and dirt from the cymbal's grooves. And be sure and dry the cymbal thoroughly when finished.

Use the brand-name solutions. Once you've gotten rid of the grime, you can polish the cymbal with one of the solutions put out by the cymbal companies—Zildjian and Paiste both have products on the market. Ask about them at your music store.

Check out an auto store. Many drummers have found useful items at their local auto supply store. There are several light rubbing compounds for car finishes that seem to work well for cleaning and polishing cymbals (Dupont sells one), and the buffing cloths sold for use on cars are also effective on cymbals.

Don't use just any copper or brass polish. Although there may be a temptation to rush out to your supermarket and buy the first polish you see, *don't do it.* Many compounds, such as *Brasso,* are much too abrasive for use on cymbals, and will actually eat away at your investment. Other polishes may build up over time on the cymbal's surface, and affect its tone. Also, since different cymbals are composed of different alloys, a general polish simply may not be as effective as the compounds sold by the cymbal companies for their particular products. So it's a good idea to steer away from general polishes.

Similarly, you want to watch out for compounds which, like *Brasso,* will eat away at your cymbals (turpentine, or oven-cleaning compounds, for instance).

Never use an electric buffer. Although some might argue with this, the consensus seems to be that an electric buffer will do more harm than good. The buffer's motion can create so much heat so quickly that it can throw off the cymbal's delicate tone, which the folks at the factory worked so hard to create.

Do not use steel wool. Again, while the temptation may be to dive in with a *Brillo* pad and start scrubbing away, all cymbal experts will tell you that this is a bad idea. The erosion will destroy the cymbal's tone, and may eventually wind up destroying the cymbal itself. Save the steel wool for pots and pans.

With cymbal cleaning, there are as many "ideal" methods as there are people to ask about it. The things to *not* do are generally more important than finding one definite method. Find a good non-abrasive cleanser and be prepared to use a lot of elbow grease (a natural skill for a drummer). The main thing to keep in mind is that you want to *clean* your cymbals, not destroy them.

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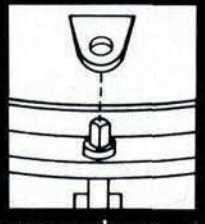

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Transcribed by Skip Shaffer

Chuck Flores

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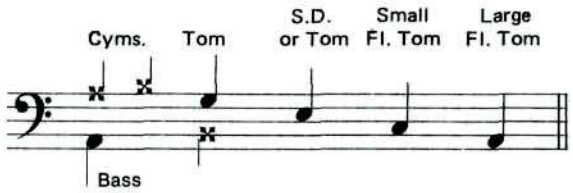

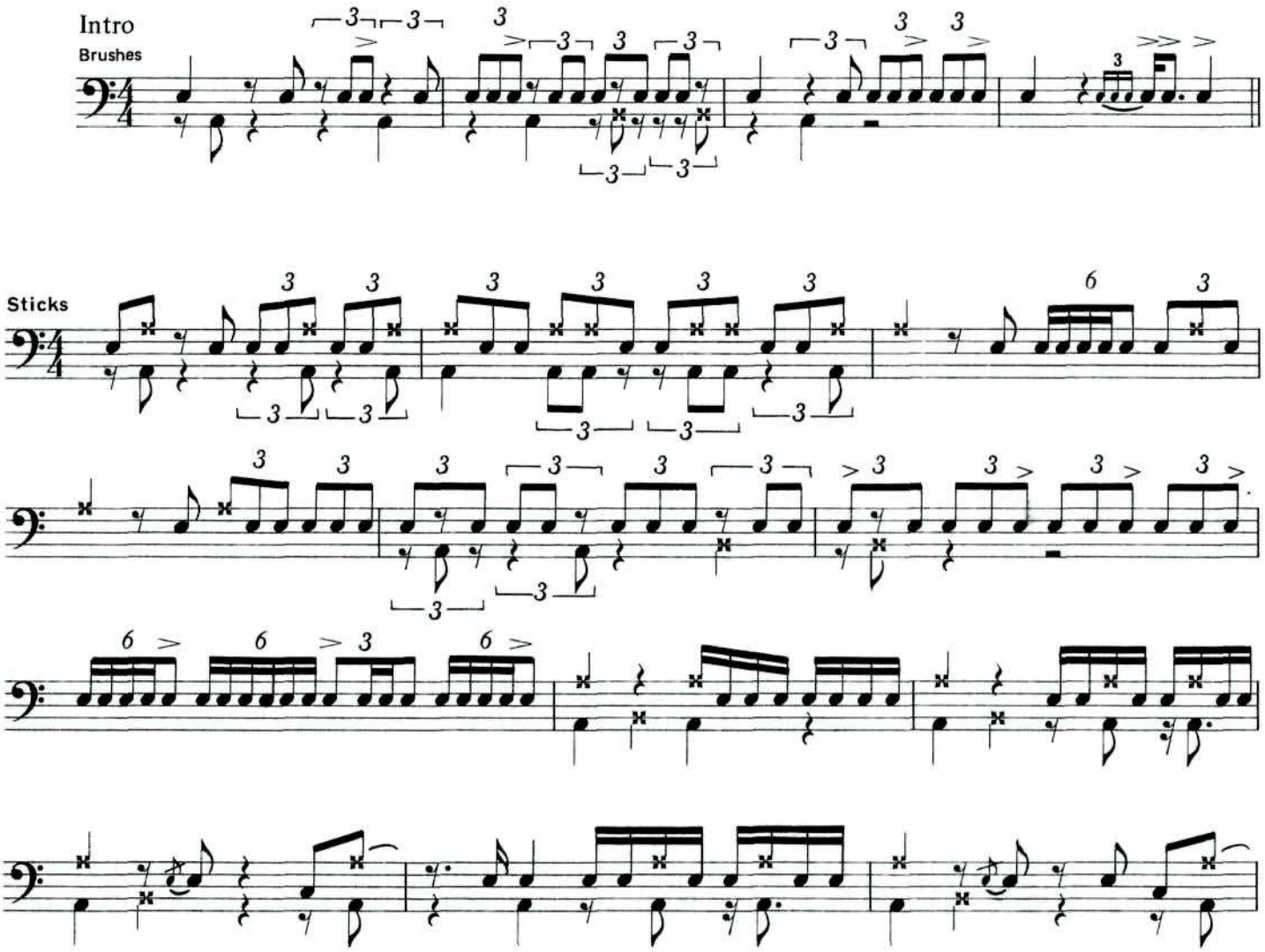

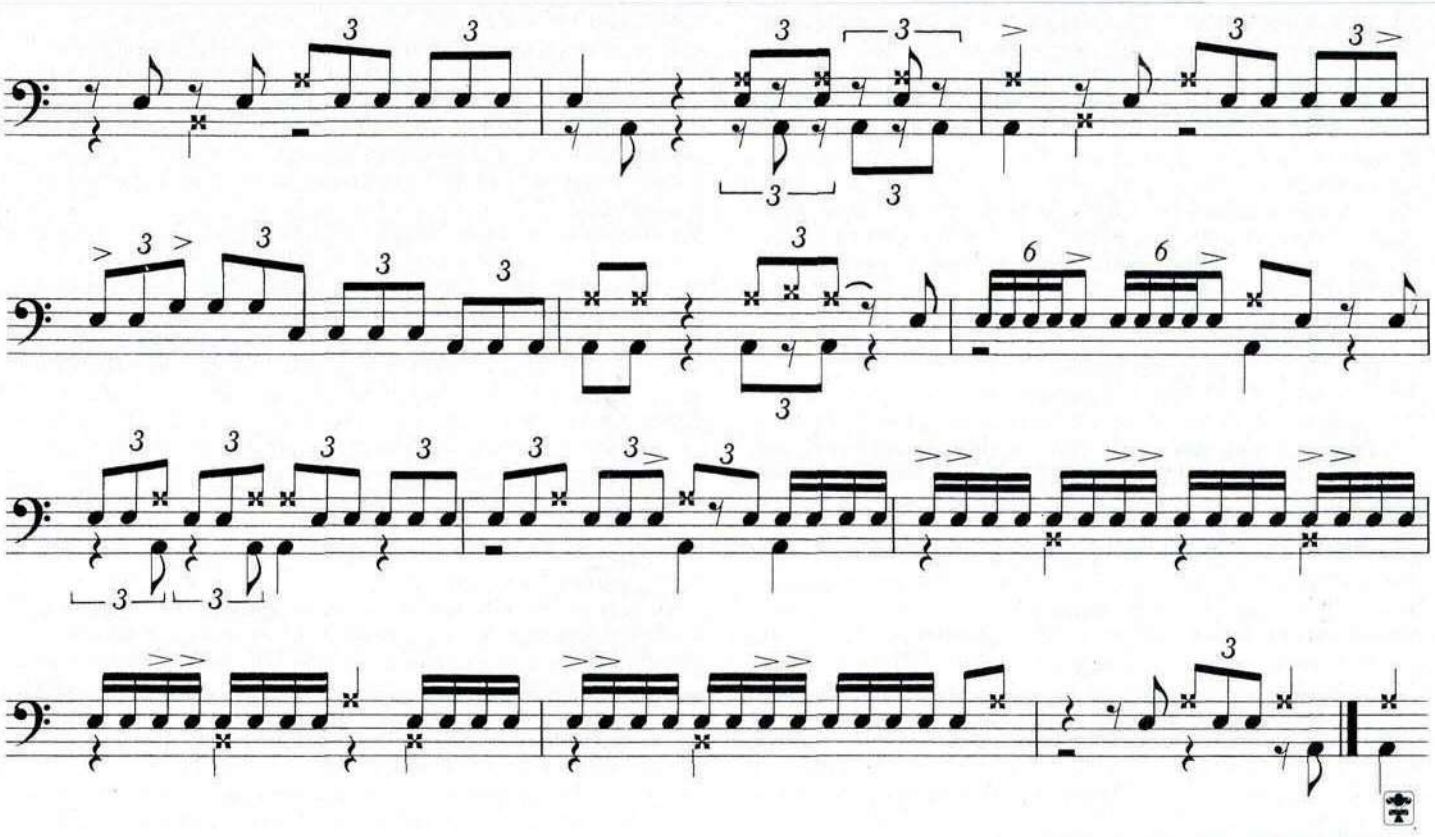

Reader's Platform *continued from page 4*

8) Keith's last kit was a natural wood Premier *Resonator* kit plus the usual concert toms. This was used on the *Who Are You* album, and he only used one bass drum on the sessions. Everything on this kit—including the heads—was Premier. His sticks were always Premier *C.* Keith used the cheapest Premier bass drum pedal with a wood beater.

Phil Dixon
Leicester, England

T. Bruce Wittet replies: "My sources had written that The Who did play Hamburg before Keith Joined. "Tommy's Holiday Camp" was a co-writing. If Pete Townshend wanted to give Moon the royalties then that's very benevolent of him. I don't really want to dispute that. It doesn't really pertain to the main points in the article. As for Keith playing Slingerland drums at Monterey—I'd suggest that's a point for argument. If the shells were Slingerland, the lugs were Ludwig. It was a rented set as far as I know. As for point six, it's a fact—Moon has been quoted, and Premier uses that quote when faced with inquiries about Moon—that he did use an array of concert toms and the double-headed toms. The sizes ranged anywhere from 8" concert toms to an 18" floor tom. There's no question that later in his career he switched from the triple top toms all the same size to a much more versatile setup of various head sizes. It may be that that 10 x *14 was the size of the toms on the kit he ordered from Premier and he may have changed it. Moon is quoted in* Melody Maker *in the early '70s as saying he used A. Zildjians exclusively and went on to list the sizes. It may have been a very quick turnaround where he went back to Paiste, or there may be a contradiction. Moon was often very vague about the matter of equipment usage. You wonder whether he even cared. My sources for the article ranged from miles of clippings from just about everything that was published on The Who in English and French, to obscure BBC tapes, to literal firsthand accounts from Phil Evans, a close personal friend of Peter Townshend. I did a lot of research through old Who demo tapes and all the records.*

I'd like to thank Phil for his additions. It's unfortunate that when I originally contacted the Premier Drum Company, persons like Phil were not immediately available. Some of the discrepencies are welcome. There are many questionable points that I had to ignore in the article because they couldn't be substantiated."

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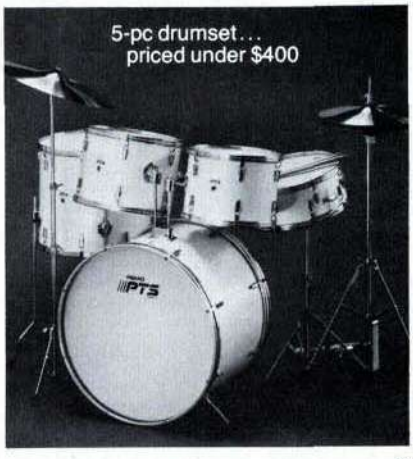

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Jim Gordon *continued from page 25*
landmarks that you like to go back and listen to?
JG: Yeah. There was a Judy Collins album called *Who Knows Where The Time Goes,* which is a real good album. Great songs. I like that sound back then. I thought Gary Puckett's records were pretty good too. I liked that big band rock 'n' roll sound that they had back then. They recorded it all live. The singers, the strings, all the brass—everything was live in the studio.

I liked Phil Spector a lot. I played percussion on a lot of his music. Some of The Righteous Brothers and The Ronettes. I thought Phil Spector was real good.
SF: How was he to work with?
JG: Oh, he was crazy. He'd have six guitar players, three piano players, two drummers, five percussionists and we'd all get in there and play a tune for four or five hours and get this incredible sound.
SF: Would he direct the whole thing?
JG: Yeah, he would. He'd have an arranger who'd have a chart written out and then Spector would come in and change whatever he didn't like. It was real interesting.
SF: Hal Blaine did a bunch of those dates too, didn't he?
JG: Yeah, he did. Hal and Earl and Frankie Capp. I was on percussion then. Maracas, bells, and things like that. Then I started getting in playing drums and pretty much got away from playing percussion.

The live things were real interesting, and the Union Gap and Beach Boys stuff. Bobby Darin was kind of interesting; I did a bunch of stuff with him. There was The Sunshine Company, a bunch of stuff at Warner Brothers, the Everly Brothers, Nancy Sinatra, Ann Margaret—all kinds of far-out artists they'd bring in.
SF: You did some stuff with Gordon Lightfoot, didn't you?
JG: I sure did. They used to cut the tracks up in Toronto where Gordon lives and I would come down here and overdub drums onto the tracks for his first few albums. Then they started taking me up to Toronto to play with him up there. Those were very methodic little tunes. He had everything all worked out. He was a very methodical man.

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SF: Were there any sessions where you looked at a chart and thought, "Oh my God! There's no way I'm going to get through this"?
JG: Yeah, I used to have nightmares about that. Like the next one is going to be the one I can't read. But, it never happened. Remember Friends of Distinction? They had a few hits that were very difficult to read. The bass drum pattern was usually the same as the bass guitar. Everything was completely written out, and they were a real challenge. The thing that bothered me was going in and reading somebody's chart who didn't know anything about writing for drums. You have to figure out, "What does he want?" You have to kind of interpret what he's got written down. Those are kind of frustrating.
SF: Do you get asked by drummers, "How do I get into the studio?"
JG: Quite a bit. I tell them to try to get in with a songwriter or a publishing company and do demos. That's how I got in. I worked for Lenny Waronker when he was working for his Dad at what is now United Artists. We used to go in and do songwriter demos all day long and get ten dollars a tune and five dollars an overdub. Believe me—to get those overdubs you'd learn a lot. The guy would come in and play his tune. You'd make out a little chart, cut it, and do that for maybe ten tunes a day, maybe three days a week.

At that time, I'd tell people that that was probably the best way to do it. Get hooked up with a songwriter; get him on your demo dates. If they liked the tunes and they liked the way you play, then they'll call you back again.
SF: When you decided to concentrate on playing studio drumset, were there any technical things that you found most useful?
JG: Paradiddles. The paradiddle is probably the most important one to me. I always tried to subdivide everything. I always tried to make a logical pattern out of anything I did, and tried to make it logical and equal so it didn't ramble. And I'd try to divide the tune into sections and make phrases out of it so it would all be even.
SF: You mean you would look at a pattern on a chart and think, "If I play *this* with my bass drum and *this* with my hi-hat . . . " Is that how you'd subdivide a chart?
JG: Right. Usually off of the right hand playing either sixteenths, eighths, or quarters. Then I'd fill in the snare from there and the bass drum. It's real logical.
SF: Hypothetically, let's say you arrive at the studio for a date with a singer. You've never heard the music or seen the charts. What's the first thing you like to do when you get into the studio? What do you like to lock into or listen for?
JG: I listen to the bass player. That would be the first thing to lock into. I don't really like to play the same bass pattern as the bass player. I like to play something that goes along with it. Then I try to lock into the guitar. I listen to guitars quite a bit, the rhythm guitar, and also the vocalist to see what kind of rhythm *feel* he has and how he's phrasing. There are a million ways of playing eighth notes, and if you're not playing the way the guy's phrasing it, then I don't feel that's right.
SF: Are you conscious of the song lyrics?
JG: Oh sure. And the chord progression, too. That would determine what tone you're going to use; whether you're going to use your hi-hat or your ride cymbal, tom-tom rides, where the fills go, and the timbre of the drums.
SF: How many different drumsets did you use?
JG: I had two. I would use one as much as I could, but when there would be a conflict I'd have them bring the other one over so I could go to another date. I had two sets that basically sounded alike and, luckily, two sets of cymbals that were pretty close too. I started out with a Ludwig set. My first set was a little 20" maple bass drum, an 8 x 12 tom and a 14 x 14 tom. Real good little set. I used that a lot. Remember "These Boots Are Made For Walking"? I used that set on that record. Then I went to a 22" bass, 8 x 12 and 9 x 13 toms and a 16" floor tom. I liked *Diplomat* heads but then I went *to Ambassadors.*

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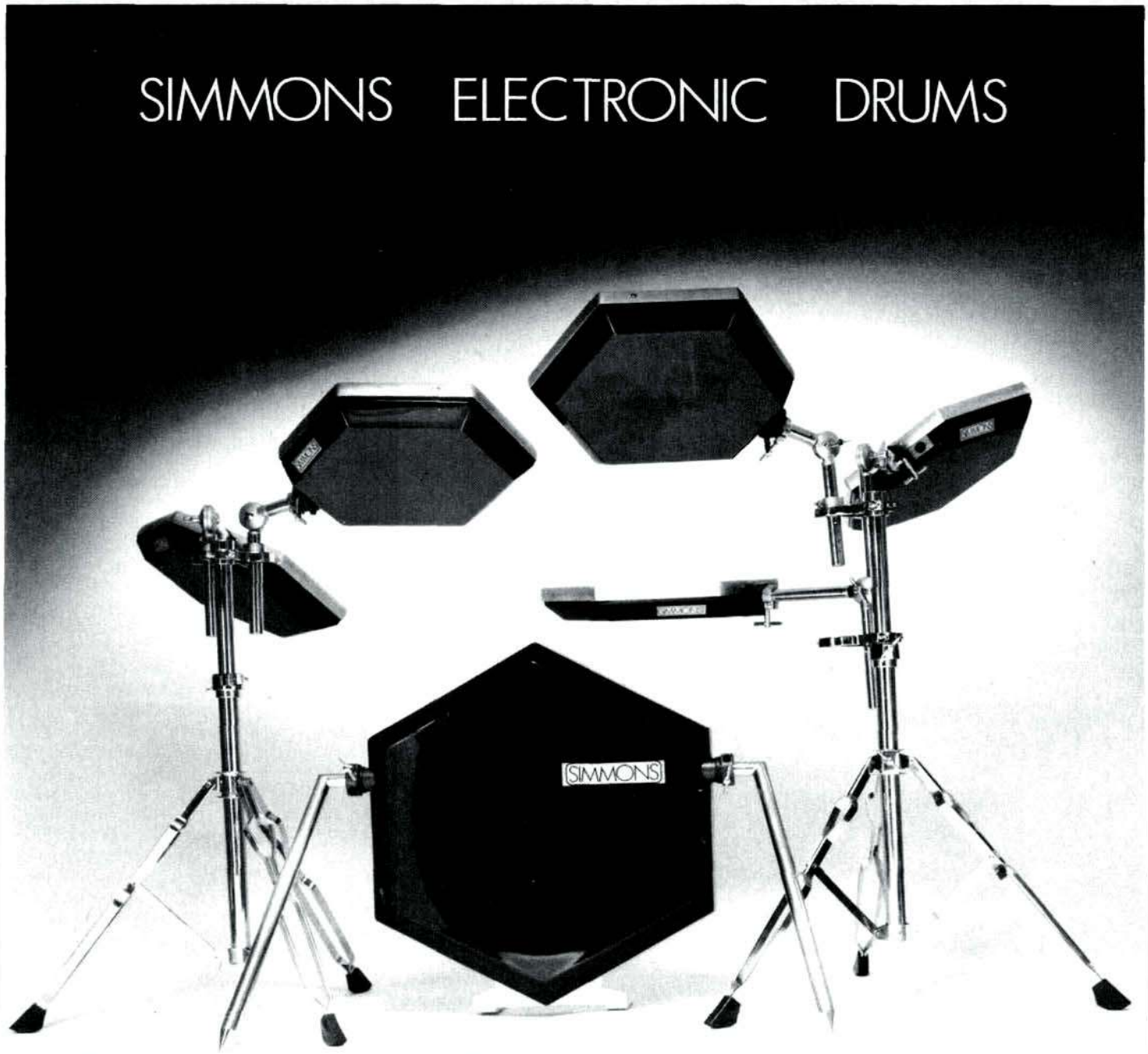

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ous drum. I just bought a little 10" Tama rack tom that's marvelous too. I mount it on a cymbal stand.

SF: That sounds like a Jim Keltner set-up.

JG: It is, kind of. Jim and I really started together. He was with a group. I was working for Warner Brothers and they had me come in and play drums on his album because they didn't think he could play! I couldn't understand why they wanted to use *me.* But, Jim took it real well. Then he started to do sessions and we ran into each other a lot. We were good buddies. I was about twenty or twenty-one when we met. Jim's probably a little older. But, he plays so different than I do. He came from like a real jazz influence where I was more influenced by rock 'n' roll. So, when we played together we fit in real well.

SF: Has your cymbal set-up varied from the '60s to today?

JG: It's pretty much the same. I use a 22" Zildjian ride now which is kind of a medium. I use Paiste hi-hats that are 14". I like 15" crashes a lot and I've got two really nice 18" Zildjian crash cymbals that are pretty well matched that I use onstage. I've got some 16s, 17s, a couple of 18s. I've got a real nice Chinese cymbal—a Paiste—which is great for roaring. It sounds like the ocean. And I've got a real nice 20" ride which just cracked on me. I'm heartbroken about it. I've got a few half-cymbals that I still try and use, too!

SF: Is the stick size important to you?

JG: Yeah. It depends on what I'm doing. If I'm working a little club I like a light stick, but I mainly use Regal Tips. I love Regal Tip 5*Bs* and *5As.* I think they're great sticks, and I've got a few with wood tips, but I like the plastic tips a lot.

SF: Are you still using a four- or five-piece set?

JG: With this band I have 10", 12", and 13" toms, two 16" toms, a regular snare and probably a couple of Syndrums. I like Syndrums. I have a set of those that are really nice. I'm using *Pinstripe* heads now, which I like very much, except I use *an Ambassador* on the snare. I use a one-headed bass drum. I'd love to use two heads. I used two heads with Derek and The Dominos. I had a 24" Camco. I loved that. Now I use a 22" with a blanket for miking. I'm using three crashes and a ride . . . possibly a fourth crash . . . two 16"s, a 17", and a 22" ride. And that's about it. It's a nice-sized kit. It's not real big. I'd love to play a giant one, but how do I play it? My music just doesn't lend itself to that.

SF: Have you ever experimented with double bass drums?

JG: Yeah, I did for a while. I had two 22"s. I enjoyed it, but it wasn't up my alley. I'm a simpler player than that, I think. I like to play a little simpler than sixteenths on the bass drum all the way through.

SF: What brand foot pedal are you using?

JG: I use a Pearl. I've got a Camco hi-hat, but I'm thinking about using a Tama. They make good stuff. I've got a couple of Ludwig cymbal stands and a couple of Yamaha cymbal stands. They seem to work real well.

SF: Have you ever considered or been asked to endorse a drum?

JG: Yeah, Camco. I almost did. I went down to their new factory. I shouldn't tell you this, but I didn't want to. At that time I thought I was going to play Yamaha, because they'd asked me to play the drums and give them some criticism. They're real good drums, too. The ones I've played have had incredibly heavy rims and the shells were usually six-ply, maybe. Not real thick. But they were nice, they were a fairly "airy" drum, which I like, and that's what I find my Camcos are. They tend to breathe a little bit. I always liked that sound that you'd get from a Remo white frosted skin. Almost a little buzz to it. With the clear heads and the *Pinstripes* it's a clearer tone and there's not that air in there. But, recording-wise, those *Pinstripes* sound good.

SF: Today, many drummers want to avoid going on the road with a band to get into studio drumming. You were a top studio drummer who decided to go on the road. Why?

JG: I did about seven straight years of sessions and I was just getting tired of it. I heard this little band called Delaney & Bonnie & Friends and I said, "Wow!" I'd been working with Leon Russell a little bit in the studio. He always had me up to his house to jam. Keltner would also be up there. They made that the original Delaney & Bonnie & Friends album. I said, "Gee, that's a great band." I thought it would be a neat thing to get back into playing some music like that instead of regimented—or whatever it is—charts. I wanted a change and I really wanted to get out and play with a lot of people.

We were mostly on the road for a year and a half with that band. We played a little club in the Valley called The Brass Ring and then we started touring a little bit. We went over to England and Delaney and Bonnie had worked with Eric Clapton, so he invited us all to play over there and we did a tour. That's where we did the live album. That's the only album I did with Delaney and Bonnie. Eric was on that. Then we came back and toured the States a bit and the band kind of fizzled out. Everybody went their own way.

SF: Did you enjoy being on the road?

JG: Yeah I did. I always liked that. I still do. It never really bothered me. I guess it was because I started out on the road when I was so young. I like to travel and I like to see the different people and different places to play. I always regarded it as a challenge. To play consistently every night was kind of refreshing.

SF: Was it different touring in the '60s than it is now?

JG: Well ... I don't know. Now it's back to buses more or less. But it was all buses back then. In the '70s everybody flew and now there are all these charter buses that you can rent.

SF: What did it take to put together Delaney & Bonnie to go on the road? Was there much rehearsal?

JG: Quite a bit. We worked a lot in a club three or four nights a week. We'd get together and rehearse before the tour for maybe a solid month, every day, all day. Just jamming and playing together and living together. I think that's a good way to do it. You get to know everybody and get to understand how you interact with each other as players.

SF: Would you agree that there are not too many people willing to put bands together like that anymore?

JG: Yeah. It's different now. I'm in a band that's starting to get a little action and we rehearse once a week. But, they're all studio

players and it seems to be all the rehearsing that's necessary. I don't know why. Any more than that seems like too much. It gets redundant almost. It seems to have changed. I know with Joe Cocker, when I was with Mad Dogs, we rehearsed a couple of weeks before we went on the road. With Derek and The Dominos we rehearsed a good six months.

SF: In the '60s and '70s putting a band together was almost *the* thing to do. Maybe today players are inclined to want to take an easier way out, or try to get into the studio because you hear all the stories about studio musicians making all this great money without going on the road.

JG: I know what you mean. Unfortunately, I think all this studio work hurt bands a lot. There aren't as many bands as there should be because everybody wants to get into the studios and make all those bucks.

SF: Maybe it's economically more difficult to put together a band now.

JG: I think so. Sure.

SF: What—in ballpark figures—did it cost to put a band like Delaney & Bonnie & Friends on the road?

JG: Not very much. All tolled, rehearsal studios and everything, maybe five thousand. Everybody had their own instruments—we'd get like $125 a week or something, and we'd rehearse. If we got a deal to go on the road, if we got bookings, we'd just go.

SF: At that time, what could a band expect to draw out of a concert?

JG: Delaney & Bonnie? I would say maybe $15,000, and that was doing good!

SF: What was the total touring entourage?

JG: A road manager, maybe *two* roadies, maybe a crew of four or five, which we'd pick up through a sound company or a light company.

SF: Did you have to set up your own equipment?

JG: I did with Delaney & Bonnie, but after that I didn't. I had a drum roadie.

SF: Who's in your new band?

JG: It's really a good little band. There's a guitar player by the name of Larry Rolando; a bass player, Jerry Sheff, who used to be with Elvis; Denny Timms, a piano player who plays with the Moore Brothers; myself; and our singer/songwriter's name is Steven Luce. We're managed by Alive Enterprises now. We're in the midst of negotiating some kind of a deal to get an album out. We've been together about four or five months now. We play in town about two days a week at different clubs. We've got some good reactions and we're kind of like a rock 'n' roll band.

SF: Do you sing when you play?

JG: No I don't. Never have. I'm a terrible singer. I sing in the shower.

SF: What do you sing in there?

JG: Oh, anything I can think of. I try to write songs. I play piano and guitar a little bit. I don't really have a voice. I never really concentrated on it.

SF: Are you writing for the new band or helping to arrange tunes?

JG: Oh yeah. Steve will come in with an idea or a set of changes. We'll maybe write a bridge or put some patterns into it or just work the tune up all together. It's really a neat way to work. I'm really happy doing this thing. It's going to be good, I think.

SF: Are you planning on going on the road?

JG: Absolutely. We'll try to get an album out first.

SF: What's the history behind Derek and The Dominos? You must've loved that group.

JG: Oh yeah. It was terrific. It was one of the best bands I was in. It was Eric's idea. We did a couple of tours with Eric when he was with Delaney & Bonnie & Friends. When Delaney & Bonnie broke up, I got a call from George Harrison to go over and do his *All Things Must Pass* album in London. So did Carl Radle and Bobby Whitlock. Bobby had gone over to write songs with Eric. He was over there earlier. Carl and I went over to work on *All Things Must Pass,* and from there I started jamming a little bit with Eric, and he asked us to be in his band. We all were living out at his house and rehearsing everyday. We learned all these songs and went out on the road.

SF: So, it was six months before you did your first concert?

JG: We worked some clubs around England, little mecca ballrooms and discotecques. We'd hustle back from Eric's house and drive out and do the gig, then go back and rehearse everyday. It was about six months before we got over to doing the album in Miami. From there we only did one tour. We did the American tour before the album was released. Nobody knew who we were. Eric didn't want his name involved with the band at all. He wanted it to be like a band instead of "Eric Clapton and such and such."

SF: He doesn't seem to be too comfortable with fame.

JG: He handles it very well, but I don't think he likes it. I don't know. He's always saying that he's not as good as he should be. He's very tough on himself. But, he's a great player!

SF: How was the crowd response when Derek and The Dominos was touring?

JG: They liked it very much. Everybody seemed to like it a lot. We always filled the place wherever we played. We didn't play real big places, sometimes 3,500, maybe 7,000 at the most. But it was always packed.

SF: I know Duane Allman helped out a lot on the album. Did he do any touring with the band or jamming onstage?

JG: He did play on a couple of dates. He almost joined the band. Eric was trying to get him to join the band, but Duane decided to stick with The Allman Brothers. He kind of dropped out and went down South. We were recording the album in Miami and The Allman Brothers were doing an outdoor concert. Tom Dowd says, "C'mon. You've got to go hear this band." We all went down and heard them and Eric invited the band to come back to the studio after the concert. They came back and we all started jamming, and Duane just never left!

SF: How long was *Layla* in the making?

JG: Two weeks.

SF: Were you comfortable with the Derek and The Dominos live

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album?

JG: Yeah, I didn't think it was so bad. I thought it was a really good tight band. The singing was great, Eric's playing was fine, and the tunes were all great. Yeah, I thought it was really good. I took a big drum solo on that album and that was a real thrill for me!

SF: You hadn't been doing many solos on the records.

JG: Oh no. I remember when we were in Liverpool one night, Eric said, "Why don't you start with a drum solo?" I said, "Oh. Okay." And from then on they just kept it in the act. It was really fun.

SF: Do you enjoy soloing?

JG: Not really, no. I like ensemble playing, actually. I like to fill a lot, and play around chord changes, but I'm not crazy about solos. Sometimes they get redundant, but there are some great soloists out there.

SF: What are you thinking about during a solo? I imagine to open a concert it would be a free-form solo until you led the band into the song.

JG: Right. That only lasted a couple of dates, then we would play an uptempo rock thing, a boogaloo. The band would stop and I'd go into my solo. I try to play phrases and more or less play the tune, then kind of go off on some kind of tangent. It wasn't always prepared. I liked to do it spontaneously. I had a few things that were prepared, but then there'd be a portion of it where I'd try to divide the beat or do some kind of syncopated, polyrhythmical thing around what I'd laid down as the basic flow of the solo. Then I'd try to get into some kind of technical thing; some type of snare drum rudimental dexterity thing. Then lead back into the time and back into the tune.

SF: Do you have any favorite drum soloists?

JG: I like Buddy Rich. I like Billy Cobham a lot. He's amazing. I like the drummer who used to be with Black Oak Arkansas, Tommy Aldridge. I think he's marvelous. I used to like Tony Williams a lot. I used to go see him all the time.

SF: What do you feel is a comfortable balance between developing a good ear and becoming an ace sightreader?

JG: I think developing an ear is the most important thing you could possibly do. If you know how to read, you've also got to be able to interpret. If you can't read, you've got to be able to hear. If you can't hear, and figure out the tunes, and figure out what you should play—you're *not* going to be able to play!

SF: It seems as if your development was pretty well-balanced in that respect.

JG: Yeah, I listened a lot. I like to listen more than to read, actually. To make up a part. I always find that that's really fun to do.

SF: Why do you think some people quit the music business?

JG: I don't know. No jobs. Money. Not being able to get a break. That's a big part of it. Being at the right place and having someone that can get you work or be able to hear you. But, I think it's a shame if somebody's got a talent in music and they can't make it. I've encountered a lot of people like that. It's real sad if they have to get some other kind of job.

SF: But, what's the difference between yourself, a successful player, and a person with equal talent who doesn't make it?

JG: I don't know. I think it's a shame, actually. It's like that date— I hate to bring this up—that I did with Keltner, where they wouldn't let him play. To me it was just plain ridiculous because the guy was definitely a great player. I think it's a shame, but if I was in that position—which at times I have been—where nobody would listen to something, I don't think I could give up. Because I can't see me doing anything else but music. I guess that's the difference.

SF: Have you ever felt like "I don't want to do this any more," or have you walked away from the drums for a while?

JG: Not too often. Maybe once or twice, but it didn't last very long! I've never taken another job. But, I've taken like a little break. But, I want to play. When I did take a break—I always went back to music. I would find myself playing around the house, looking for some kind of job or just doing something. I think if you're going to be a musician, you're going to have to be a musician, come what may. Unless you can't make any money. If you're starving to death, that's a different story.

SF: Did you ever get into teaching drums?

JG: No, I haven't. I've thought about it. I did a couple of seminars at a music institute here in L.A., which was a lot of fun. Question and answer. I took some charts down and showed them different ways that people write drum music in the studio, and tried to explain the way I thought about tuning my drums.

SF: Are you meticulous about tuning your drums?

JG: Well, I do it mostly by ear. I was always told that instead of striking a drum, you were supposed to draw the sound *out* of the drum. I try and play it that way. It's always worked for me! Tuning was, and still is, a big part of my sound. I try to get that sound that I like.

SF: Do you like the studio flat, dead sound?

JG: No I don't. I like the drummer with Foreigner's sound a lot. I like Alex Van Halen's drum sound. Amazing drummer, that kid. The flat sound I don't particularly care for that much. It works well for all kinds of things that are going on now, but I don't like it.

SF: Are you ever forced to use that sound in the studio? I've heard that many times it's the engineer that determines how the drums will sound.

JG: That's true. Especially nowadays. I know some engineers who have their own drumset. They tune it the way *they* want to hear it and you've got to play it. It's a little weird because it's usually flat, taped and dead, but they get a good sound out of it. The tone is almost like electronic drums in a way. It's all done in the booth.

SF: Are you still practicing?

JG: I practice occasionally with the metronome. I try to keep my stick control up and I try to work on new beats. I try and play as

much as I can. That's the main thing. Playing in a band, rehearsing with a bunch of guys, or even getting together and playing in a living room with the snare drum—which I do occasionally—is good for me.

SF: When you're not playing drums what do you like to do to keep yourself occupied?

JG: I play my piano a little bit. I like to jog and hang out. Mostly I try to play.

SF: Are there things that you'd like to do that you haven't done yet?

JG: I'd like to write a little bit more. I don't get to write as much as I'd like to. I'd like to find a lyricist, and write some songs, and get out and try to do some demos on them and see if I could sell them. That's really enjoyable. I got a few things published, but it's just so hard to find anybody who has any lyrics these days. It seems to me that they've already got all their songs all done. So, I just plug away and keep going over melodies and chord changes and hopefully I'll run into somebody.

SF: Do you find areas in drumming that young players are *not* paying attention to that they should in order to become professionals?

JG: Yeah. Reading for one thing. I think that's important. And developing an ear to pick up a tune. To be able to be a quick learner. To be able to come up with a part that's going to work and not have to make the rest of the band go over and over it for your benefit.

SF: Do you think that's from not listening much?

JG: Maybe it is. Maybe it's not understanding music. Not listening to the changes or the melody instead *of just* the rhythm pattern. One of the most valuable things that I ever did was pick up the guitar and play rhythm guitar. It really helped me to understand that kind of a time feel and what they go through to play the rhythm. And also piano as a percussion instrument.

SF: I think young drummers might feel that they're having enough of a challenge trying to master the drums, without the hassles of learning a completely different instrument.

JG: Well, that may be something you have to do a little farther along after you've kind of gotten control of the instrument. For starting out, I guess rudiments are the most important thing. Get a metronome and play a little bit with that. I used to come home from school and play my rudiments all night long.

SF: Did it benefit you all-around to be able to associate with musicians of the high calibre you've been with?

JG: Absolutely. Musically *and* spiritually. I think that you meet somebody who's reached the status that some of these people have and they're really very responsible people. They seem to be very caring and concerned about other people. I found it real rewarding to work with people like that.

SF: Was it a tough adjustment from being a studio player to performing onstage before thousands of people?

JG: Yeah, it was kind of a strange adjustment. I got real self-conscious about my playing. People would say, "You sounded real good," or "That was a great set," and I'd say, "No it wasn't. It was terrible." I'd brood about it and say, "Well, I've got to do better next time." Yeah, it was kind of an adjustment. I was real concerned about doing a good job all the time, and not making many mistakes.

SF: What do you think would be the toughest adjustment for a human being in going from anonymity to fame?

JG: Maybe accepting what you do and coping with what you have to go through to do it. There's more than just playing the set that night. You've got the whole day, and traveling, and whatever people who you have to interact with, and you have to kind of take a careful look at yourself and not go off the deep end. It's so easy to go overboard in one direction or another, or let yourself go in certain ways that in the long run can be really damaging to you. So you have to kind of keep a focal point on yourself and not let it drift too far on either side of where your values are, and how you're going to influence other people who you run into.

SF: Was that something you had to work on or did that come to you pretty easy?

JG: Yeah, I always tried to keep an even keel on what I was doing. But, it's not easy. I've seen so many people who have gotten a little bit of success and then they just turn around and throw it away. I know I've done that too. And they say, "What did I do that for?" All of a sudden, you're not doing that anymore.

SF: Why would someone throw away success?

JG: I'm not really sure. Maybe it's tension or something. I don't think it's something that you say consciously. I think it's something that happens subconsciously.

SF: You mentioned before about the spiritual aspect of yourself. Is that something that's important to you?

JG: Yeah, it is. I believe in God and Jesus very much and try and stay above board on all that. It's not easy. The Bible is definitely something to help you. I find that every time I study something from the Bible, or even hearing some of these people on television who talk about it—Bible studies or something like that—it's real uplifting. I really feel that.

SF: Has the spiritual part of your personality always been with you, or is that something that developed later on?

JG: Well, lately ... I don't know. I always went back and forth. I've always believed in God, but I questioned myself a few years ago, because there were a lot of my friends questioning themselves. I thought, "Maybe I should ask a few questions again, and see where I'm at." So, I bought a Bible and started getting into it again a little bit and found it real helpful. I go to church from time to time and enjoy that very much. But, I've always tried to be with God. I don't think I've ever been away from spiritualism in one way or another. It would be kind of tough not to have *something* to believe in.

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New York, New York 10024
Price: $5.00

The author presents the odd time material in three ways: "Warm-ups, Funk/Rock Patterns, and Etudes and Excercises." The warm-ups "help you think and play in each time signature." The pages are written in a single-line snare drum form and can be played on both pad and set. The author suggests ways of applying these pages to drumset. The funk/rock pages are written in four-limb independent form and presents rhythmic patterns ranging from easy to difficult. These pages represent the "heart" of the material presented. The etudes and exercises are intended to provide rhythmic material from which fills and solos can be created. These pages are also written in a single-line snare drum form. The difference between the warm-up pages and the etudes and exercises pages is that the warm-ups have sticking written in, while the etudes and exercises do not. The book suggests that the student use the warm-up stickings for the etudes as well. Meters used are 5/8, 5/4, 6/8, 6/4, 7/8, 9/8, 9/4, 11/8, 13/8, and 15/8. The back of the book contains four pages of charts which combine meters and a discography of odd-meter recordings.

Welcome to Odd Times is a very good, systematic approach to odd meters and is well-suited for the more proficient intermediate and advanced players. With odd meters being used more and more by contemporary composers, this book fills the gap in odd time methods.

Glenn Weber

CONTEMPORARY CORPS STYLE CADENCES
CORPS STYLE WARMUPS
by Jay A. Wanamaker
Publ: Alfred Publishing Co.
Price: $25.00 each

These collections of cadences and warmpups are scored for bells, xylophone, snare drums, timp-tom trio/quad toms, four bass drums, four cymbals, and some auxiliary percussion instruments. They are constructed to be effective even without full instrumentation. The warmups provide exercises which are designed to develop one-handed technique, paradiddles, rolls and "singlets." A bossa warmup is also included. The chord progression is provided for melodic improvisation. This set is a valuable addition to any percussion section's repertoire.

The collection of cadences includes "Russian Sailor's Dance," "Sabre Dance," "Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring" and "Trojan Strut" (all drums plus auxiliary percussion). These cadences are effective even though some sections are over-scored.

The music is clearly notated. However, separate tri-tom parts would be helpful. A full score and parts are included for each arrangement. The difficult sticking patterns are marked. The cadences are well-suited for a high school percussion section of average to above average ability.

Joseph W. Nebistinsky

THE WELL-TEMPERED TIMPANIST
by Charles Dowd
Publ: Belwin Mills
Melville, NY 11747
Price: $5.00

When J.S. Bach published *The Well-Tempered Clavier in* 1722, it was the first time that one collection of works incorporated all of the major and minor keys. The collection became—and remained—popular with teachers and students because of the fact that one developed a certain fluency with the entire keyboard by playing these 24 preludes and fugues. A corresponding statement can be made about Charles Dowd's book: After practicing *The Well-Tempered Timpanist,* one will develop a certain technical fluency with timpani.

The major difference between this book and Bach's work is that Bach "disguised" the technical nature of his pieces by writing them as preludes and fugues. The Dowd book, except for a few scattered etudes, is composed of pure technical studies, and therefore bears more of a resemblance to Czerny—or perhaps George Lawrence Stone—than to Bach. But this is not meant to slight the book in any way; this is a very complete collection of technical studies, which today's timpanist needs to handle the contemporary repertoire. Dowd has provided a generous amount of studies for two, three, four, five, and even six timpani. A player who only has access to two drums would still benefit from this book. The exercises themselves cover such topics as stickings, muffling, rolls, staccato notes, tuning, and cross rhythms. The studies range in difficulty from those that a relative beginner could handle, to those that would challenge a working professional. And finally, Belwin is to be congratulated for making so much material available at such a reasonable price.

Rick Mattingly

SYNCOPATED ROLLS FOR THE MODERN DRUMMER
by Jim Blacklcy
Publ: Jim Blackley
260 Hillsdale Ave. E.
Toronto, M45 IT6
Ontario, Canada

Jim Blackley's book is—above all else—*useful!* It's actually two books under a new revised edition. Volume One and Volume Two were originally printed in 1961 and 1962 respectively. In the introduction to this volume, Blackley sums up his reason for writing the book: "While we do agree that a study of rudimental patterns can be advantageous to the jazz drummer, we will not accept the theory held by many that the first basic studies all drummers should indulge in be the rudiments, for *we are most emphatic in our belief, that the development of good listening habits, time, jazz rhythm and phrasing, drumset control etc., are all essential musical requirements that must precede rudimental study. Above all, being completely familiar with the composition and hearing the bass line, chord line, and melody line with clarity, is the key to sound musical performance.*" (Italics mine.)

Volume One is "foremost a study in time and rhythm, and the application of such within a roll." Blackley has developed a fascinating and very musical study of "saving the accents and throwing the other notes away," which is not to imply sloppy articulation. His thinking is condensed beautifully in one thought where he says, "Try to think of singing and dancing, not marching."

Volume Two is the same approach to triplets and their variations. This is an important book. Drummer Dannie Richmond was one of the main motivators for Jim putting his concepts down on paper. Any MD readers familiar with Dannie Richmond's classic, swinging, always musical approach to drumming (particularly with Charles Mingus) will have some indication of the type of exercise found in this book. Highly recommended.

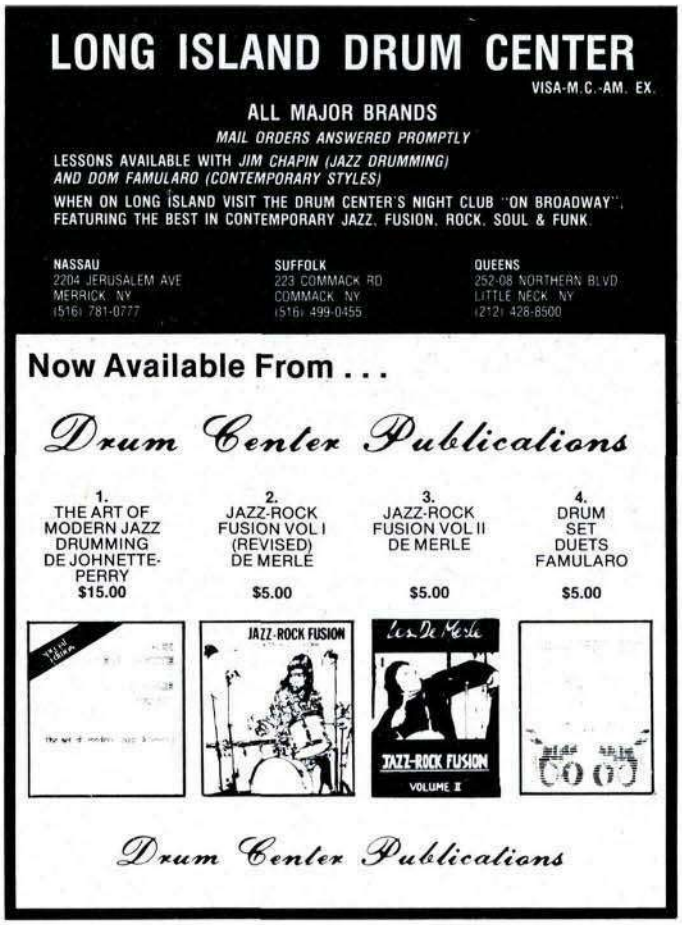
Scott Fish

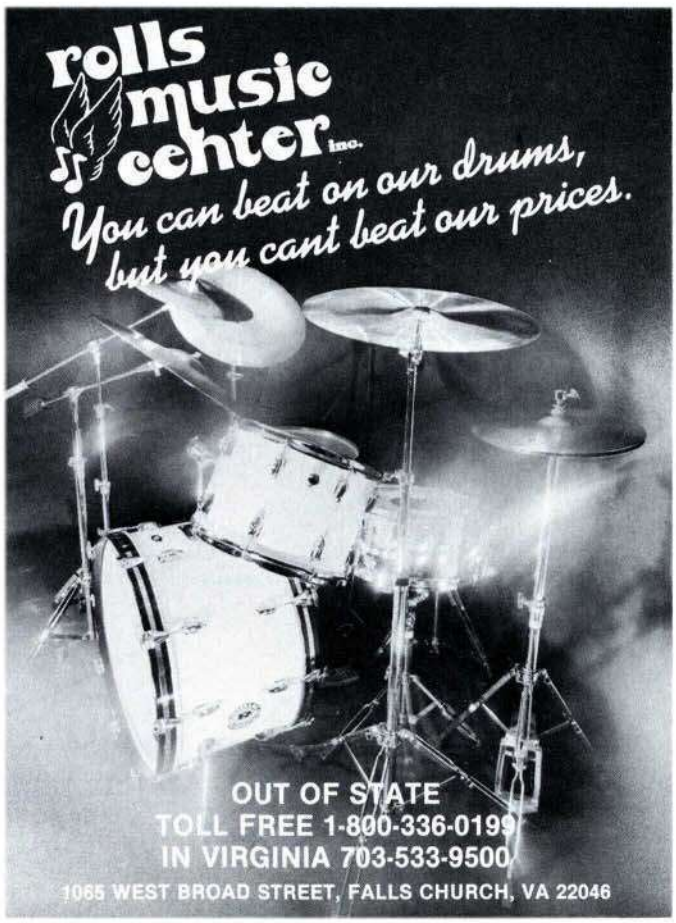
MELODIC SOLO ENCOUNTERS for DRUM SET
by Ken Vogel
Publ: Mel Bay Publications, Inc.
Pacific, MO 63069
Price: $4.95 Stereo cassette available: $6.95

This book contains eighteen drumset solos and four pages of "natural sounds." The solos are very musical and easy to read. Some of the solos are written for as few as two drums, while other solos require a multi-tom-tom set and *RotoToms.* Each solo has a "key" which illustrates the positions of the drums and cymbals on the staff. In the "natural sounds" section, the author suggests many ways of using sticks, mallets, brushes and hands, on drums and cymbals, in order to enhance the musical effect. The music styles of rock, Latin, jazz, fusion, African and freeform are included, as well as odd meters. There are a couple of polyrhythmic measures which are interesting and very challenging.

This book presents melodic drumset solos in an interesting and educational way and is best suited for intermediate and advanced players. The solos can be used as performance pieces, and the student can learn some new beats that can be used with a group. A student can gain much from a book of this type, not only from the physical requirements of coordination and control, but from the musical awareness, understanding of musical form and the development of improvisational skills. The cassette tape is very helpful, because it allows the student to hear the author's interpretation of each solo.

Glenn Weber





by Stanley Ellis

Big Band Fills: A Two-Handed Approach

The question of big band filling is often not one of when and where to fill, but what to use as a fill. My answer has been to set down commonplace big band figures and proceed to accent and fill around these figures in different ways.

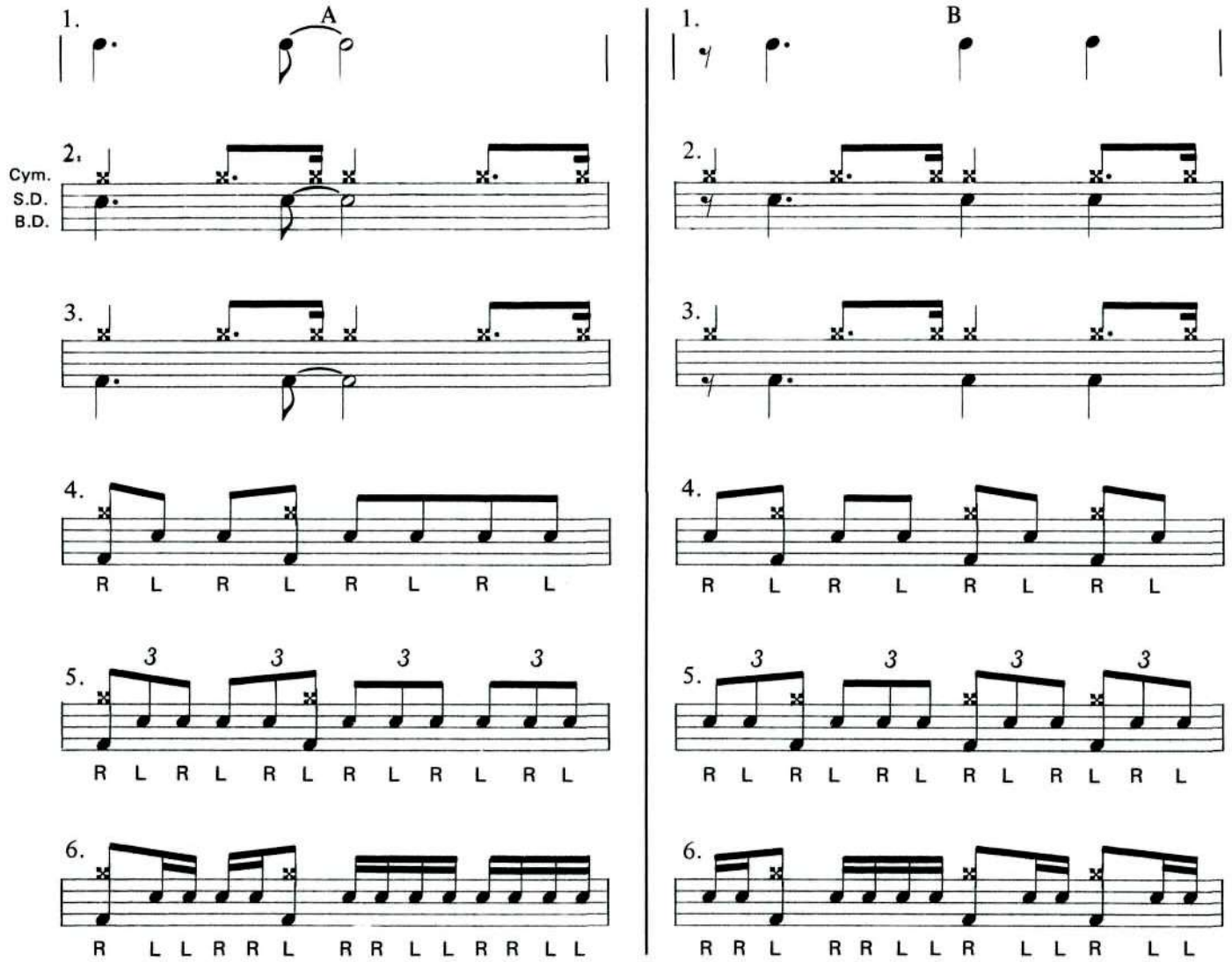
Take a look at the Examples below. Note that Line 1 of each column presents the rhythmic figure to be dealt with. Lines 2 and 3 are not fills, but merely snare and bass drum responses to the existing figures. Often, a fill is not required and a simple playing of the figure on snare and bass, while keeping the right hand swinging, is all that's needed.

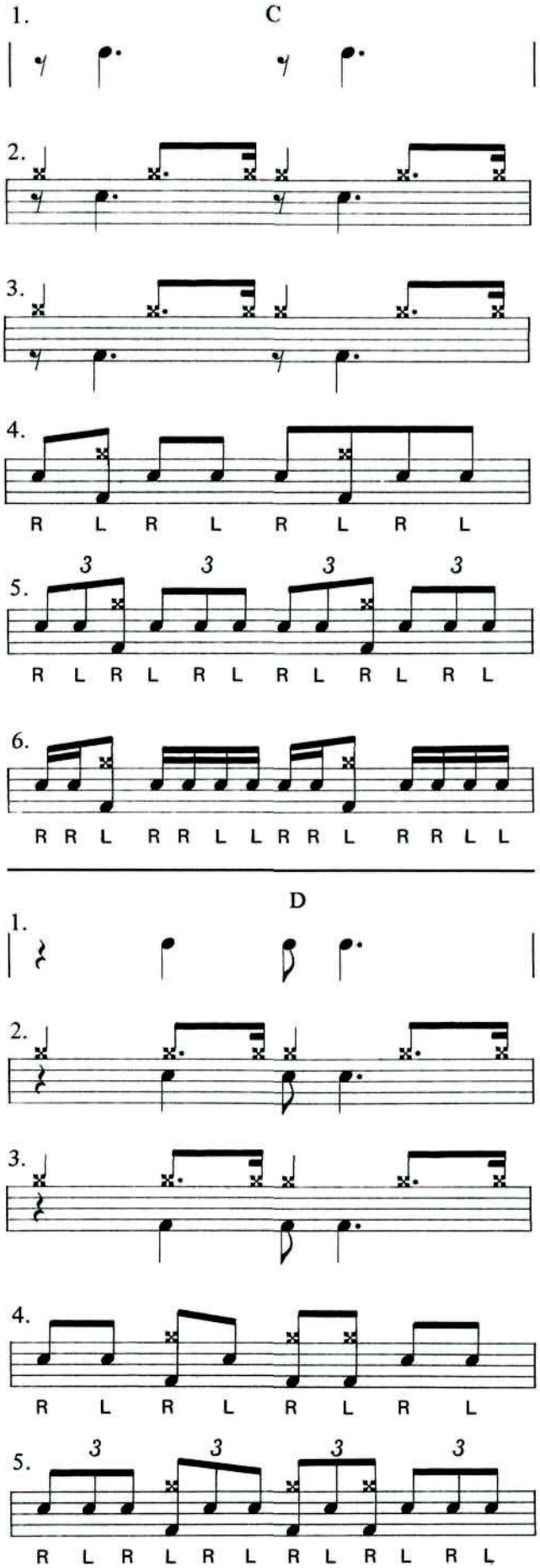
Line 4 uses an eighth-note fill with alternate strokes. The figure is to be played on the cymbals with bass drum reinforcement, while all the other space is filled with eighth notes on the snare drum. This method offers a two-handed approach for accenting with the band. If the right hand is called for on a figure, then a cymbal on the right side of the set should be used. If the left hand is required, a cymbal on the left side should be used. Because the bass drum is activated with these left- and right-hand accents, a certain degree of hand/foot coordination becomes available to the player as the exercises are practiced.

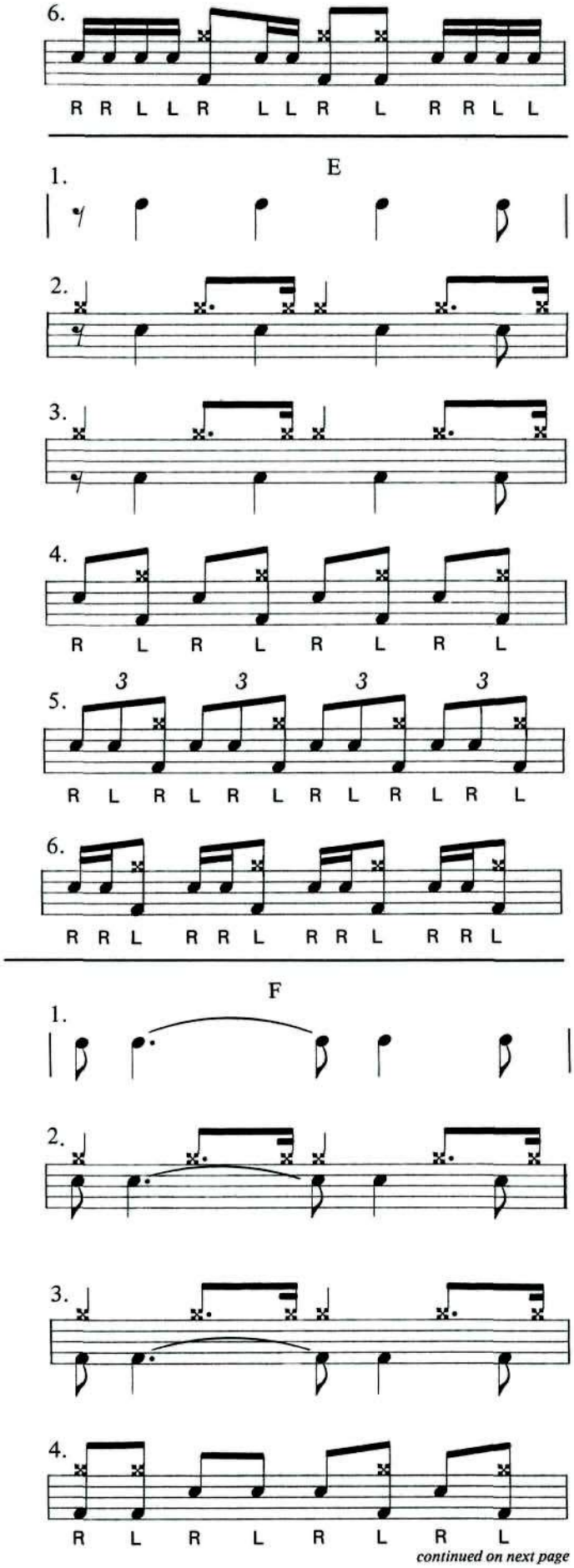
Line 5 utilizes an eighth-note triplet fill, again using alternate sticking and the two-handed approach. Line 6 uses sixteenth notes with double sticking.

All of the exercises should be played with a swing feel and with the hi-hat on beats two and four. I've found that practicing the exercises in the following ways has been most useful:

1) Play each exercise (A1, B1, etc..)until the figure becomes familiar.
2) Play one measure of time between each exercise, progressing from one to the next without stopping.
3) Play each line straight across without a pause. Do this at slow, medium and fast tempos.







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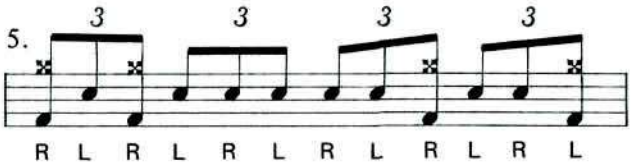
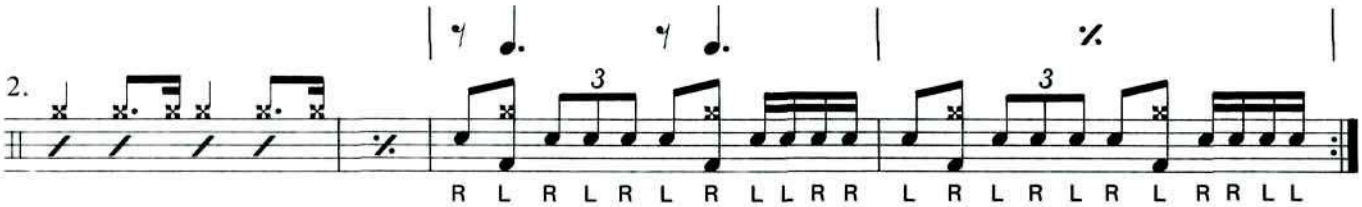
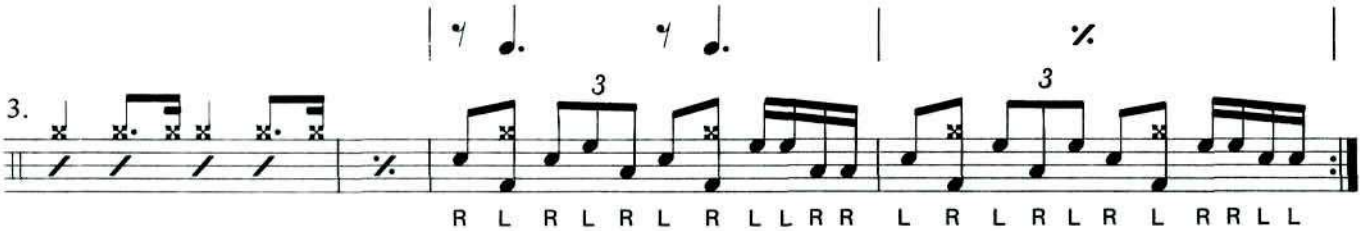


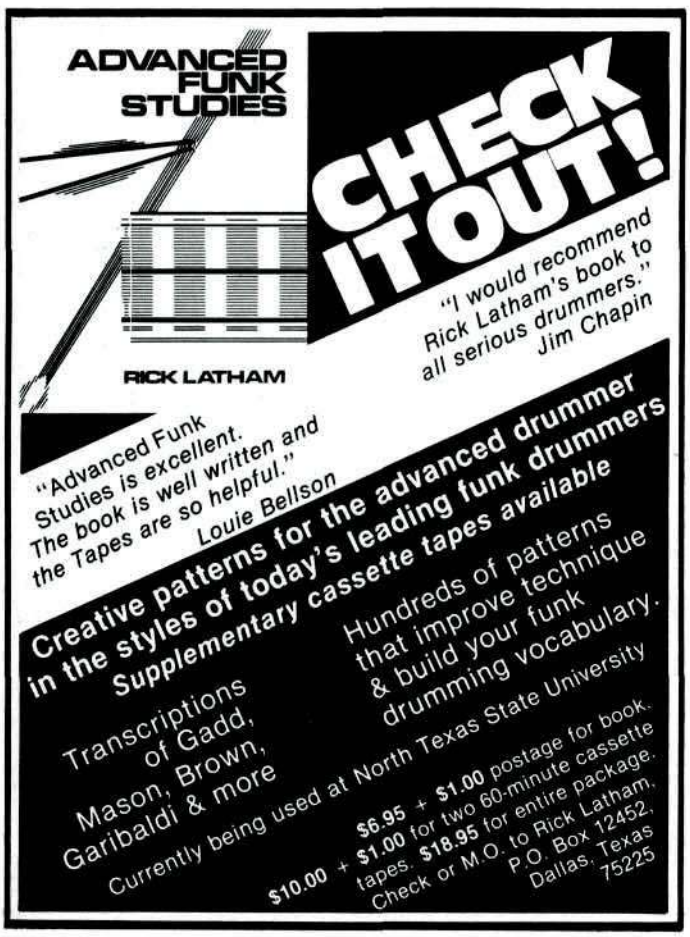
After you've completed all the fills in the three ways described, begin to mix the fills as shown in the following example:



Now try using different drums.



These exercises will give you a better understanding of, and facility with fills. But always remember to play musically and listen to what's going on around you.



It's Questionable *continued from page 6*

Q. I recently purchased a new Tama drumset that came from the factory with black dot heads on both top and bottom of all the drums. I've given them more than ample time to be broken in and can't get a real good, clean sound from them. Isn't it uncommon to use black dots on the bottom of drums?

B.R.S.
Waynesboro, VA

A. A Tama representative told us that they originally were shipping their drums with other heads. The market demanded a switch to black dots. We 'd suggest replacing the drumheads to suit your taste. It's 20/20 hindsight, but perhaps you could've worked out a deal with the music store owner to switch the heads before purchasing them.

Q. In your April '82 MD, Gina Schock mentioned the French-made Caroline bass drum pedal. What U.S. manufacturer or distributor has them?

S.C.
Atlanta, GA

A. If the Caroline bass drum pedal is still available, you might be able to buy one from the Professional Drum Shop, Hollywood, CA., or Drummers World, NYC. The name of the French manufacturer is ASBA and their address is A.S. Boudard (ASBA), 11 Rue Henri Barbusse, 94450 Limeil, Vrevannes, France.

Q. I've a 16" medium-thin Zildjian crash cymbal with an 1/8" long crack in it. Is it safe to assume that if I play at the same rate, the crack will never increase?

D.K.
Worcester, MA

A. The crack will probably continue to increase. The rate at which it'll increase is difficult to judge.

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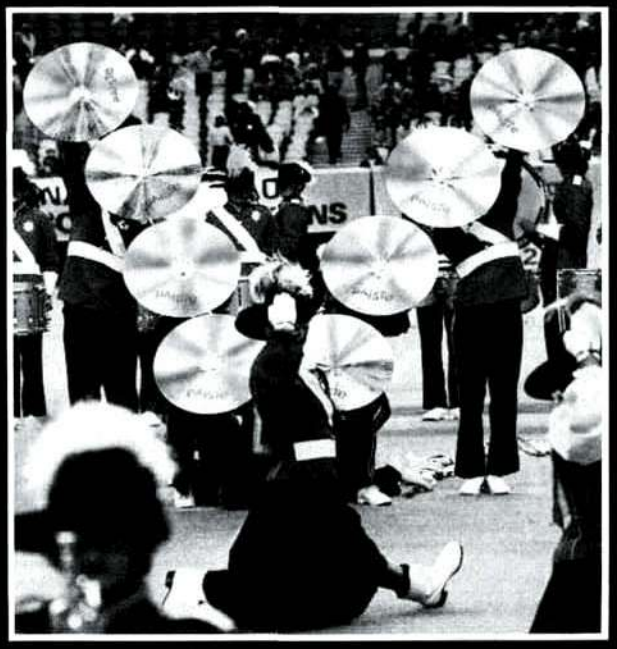
Clockwise from above: Bayonne Bridgemen, first in percussion, eighth overall; Santa Clara Vanguard, second in percussion, second overall; Concord Blue Devils, third in percussion, first overall; Madison Scouts, eighth in percussion, fifth overall. Congratulations to all the finalists.



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CYMBALS SOUNDS GONGS

Percussion Roundtable *continued from page 29*
proved, it will consist of the Standard 26 American Drum Rudiments, along with a number of new, contemporary drum rudiments. It's not a method of drumming, but rather a listing whereby the rudiments are grouped by family. I should point out that it will be updated periodically so that it will stay current with contemporary trends. This new listing of rudiments will probably be the biggest break-through in percussion in the last twenty-five years.

How do you go about arranging for the marching percussion ensemble?
Sanford: The first thing I do is outline my score. This defines the full scope of the arrangment's instrumentation, form and phrasing. I begin by scoring those ideas that I'm most comfortable with, utilizing whatever instrument I deem appropriate. It could be a timp-tom feature at letter B, or a keyboard line that's floating through my head. The concept at this point is to record your initial ideas first, and return later to fill in the various supportive parts of those main ideas.

There's been much talk of horizontal vs. vertical scoring. To achieve flow and continuity, one must think horizontally when scoring initial ideas. To achieve ensemble clarity and definition, one must think vertically when scoring parts.

Always keep in mind the wide tonal variety and range of the ensemble. You are literally scoring *for a percussion chorus.* And don't *over-write!* Many good ideas have been submerged by contrasting and conflicting parts.

I'd also suggest, when scoring timp-tom parts, include all sticking patterns, utilizing those stickings that create good flow and motion. Second, don't skip around when writing tuned bass-drum parts. You're dealing with a moving musical line that needs logical shape and form. Don't hesitate to change or rewrite parts when voice clutter occurs, or if there are problems with the performers' ability to play some of the parts.

A successful arrangement is dependent upon a confident performance, well-tuned instruments and correct utilization of appropriate mallets. When played with expressive emotion, it can create a genuine idiomatic musical style.

Do you feel it's really necessary to be able to read percussion arrangements to be in a drum corps?
Durrett: The first two drum lines I taught learned their parts through rote teaching. Most percussion sections at that time were taught in a similar manner. Due to the complexity of the music being performed by these percussionists today, I think it's safe to say that you *have* to read music relatively well to play any of the major instruments in the section.

What size snare drums are available and what do you recommend for field use?
Durrett: The sizes range from 10" deep by 14" in diameter, to 12" x 16". The smaller drum offers a higher pitch while the larger drum produces a fuller tone. I recommend the 12" x 14" snare drum for the school level. It's easier to maintain the high pitch level and is lighter in weight than the 12" x 15" which has been the standard size for years.

How do you obtain the uniform height of all the snare drums when the players are different sizes?
Tuthill: What I try to do is position the drum at the same height off the ground for each player so it creates a level appearance. Sometimes the short drummers have to wear their drums a little bit higher, while the tall players wear their drums lower than normal. I also try to position the players in the line so the tallest players are in the middle of the line, graduating it out to the ends of the line with shorter players. Snare drum carriers are often used instead of slings so the drum can be kept flat, similar to a concert snare. That keeps the drum motionless while marching.

How would someone go about arranging for a marching percussion clinic in their area?
Durrett: The easiest way is to have your music dealer contact a representative from a major drum company. The companies sponsor a number of clinicians who specialize in the field of marching percussion. Another way is to get in touch with the instructors from a nearby drum and bugle corps. Most of these instructors are qualified to present a clinic on the concept of corps-style percussion.

What do you think of the overall ability of high school percussion sections throughout the country?
Hong: The abilities of the high school sections have improved tremendously because they try to emulate the corps. However, the same problems exist as before. Fundamentals still need a great deal of attention. Too often a high school section goes for visuals and choreography at the expense of basics. I've performed clinics with groups who play fairly well, but who miss the fact that there must also be a *mental* discipline. In summary, the end products are better, but the fundamentals are not much stronger.

How do you feel Drum Corps International has improved the standards of competitive drum corps?
Campbell: DCI has improved the standards of competitve drum corps by regulating the rules and improving the consistency of adjudication. They sponsor a Rules Congress every two years which allows anyone in the drum corps arena to submit changes, and to give input to the future of drum corps. DCI also holds regular seminars for corps instructors, managers and judges. These seminars help to educate, train and improve communication on all levels. DCI has also given drum corps activity a big boost in popularity due to the

regulation of tour schedules, and the national exposure received by televising contests on PBS throughout the U.S. and Canada.

How have drum corps influenced marching bands?

Tuthill: By getting them away from geometric drills and into picture drills and exciting programming. Drum corps got their initial ideas from bands. In the mid-'50s, the major college bands were very much into picture drills. As drum corps progressed over the years, they wanted to stylize their shows and started to perform picture drills. They wrote their show trying to visually enhance the music. I think drum corps today are trying to sell the idea of picture drills back to the marching bands.

Drum corps incorporated flags and rifles which were later used to help reinforce high points in the music. Marching bands are now starting to incorporate flag and rifle lines into their shows. Staging, directionalized playing, featured soloists, visuals, use of props and pure excitement are other concepts that marching bands have learned from drum and bugle corps. I like good bands, and I think there are things bands can do very well that drum corps will never be able to do. I don't want it to sound like drum corps should take all the credit. Drum corps have learned a hell of a lot from bands.

How would percussion students benefit from performing in a marching band or drum corps?

Tuthill: Aside from the obvious musical growth, if any of your students are music education majors in college, it's very important for them to play in a marching band or drum corps. These organizations give them an invaluable experience which will be very helfpul if they pursue a music teaching career.

Performing in this type of group will also teach someone to grow on a social level. You must *learn* to work together on and off the field. For instance, the Sky Ryders will be on the road this summer for sixty-five days. These young men and women will be living and working together, and will be striving to improve their show throughout the tour. It's a *very* goal-oriented business.

Phantom Regiment *continued from page 31*

equipment was quickly loaded onto the truck as the buses pulled out at 7:45 for the forty-five-minute ride to Mile High Stadium in Denver.

When the Regiment arrived, the competition was already underway. The corps, now in full uniform, unloaded their equipment and did yet one more warm-up in the parking lot before the show.

9:20pm—On the line. Concentration. *"Phantom Regiment, you may take the field in competition."*

The next thirteen minutes were filled with an exciting and imaginative performance of "Spartacus" by Aram Khachaturian. The crowd was on its feet well before the last exhilarating note. Once off the field, helmets were removed and water bottles passed around. There were a few other corps still to perform, so members climbed into the stands to watch.

After all had performed, each corps lined up for the Finale and paraded Olympic-style onto the field. As the scores were announced the tension grew.

"In second place, with a score of 75.50 . . . The Vanguard. In first place, with a score of 76.55, from Rockford, Illinois . . . the Phantom Regiment!"

The guard saluted sharply to acknowledge the cheering crowd. One by one, the other corps paraded past in reverse order of finish. Finally, only the winners remained. Two selections from the show were played for the crowd who continued to stand and cheer. After a little encouragement, the horn line reached into their bag of tricks and pulled out a moving rendition of 1978's closer, "Elsa's Procession."

The truck was loaded once again and the buses returned to Boulder around midnight. A snack was quickly devoured by the hungry corps. There was an hour to load everything under the buses and just enough time to take a quick shower.

By 2:00am, everything was packed and cleaned, and the Phantom Regiment headed for Ogden, Utah. The end of a nineteen-hour day; nine hours of practice; a successful performance. Just another day on tour.

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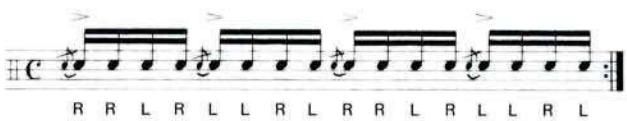
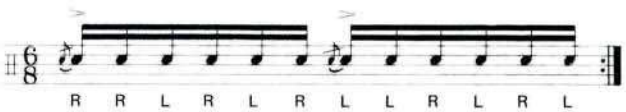
Corps Style Rudiments *continued from page 30*

Single Windmill Stroke (Flammed Mill)

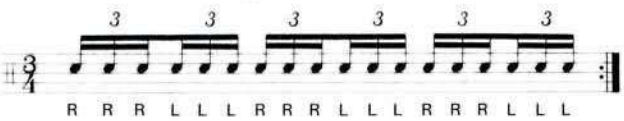
This rudiment can be used as a substitute for the flam paradiddle. Windmill strokes are more easily performed at quicker tempos and produce a flowing sound.



Double Windmill Stroke

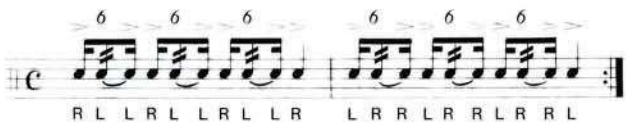


Triple-Stroke Roll



Six-Stroke Roll

Think of the six-stroke roll as an accented stroke followed by an open five-stroke roll.



All excerpts from the **Corps Style Snare Drum Dictionary,** *by Jay A. Wanamaker, Alfred Publishing Co., Inc. Used with permission.*

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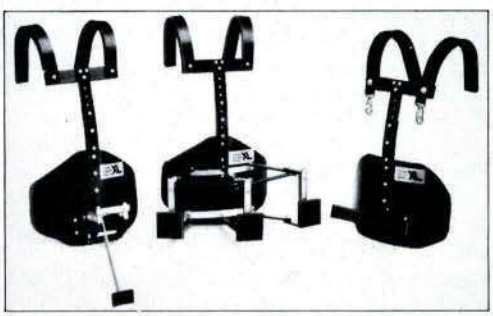

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by Neil Peart

Notes On The Making Of Moving Pictures Part II

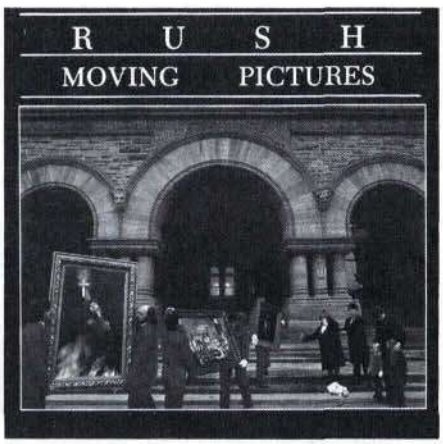
I'd like to say a few words about the dreaded click track. With a purist's pride, I resisted using this eletronic metronome for many years, although the pursuit of really good time has been a constant trial for me. It wasn't until the sessions for *Permanent Waves* that I finally relented and agreed to give it a reluctant try.

Imagine my surprise—I like it! It was much less difficult to work with than I had anticipated, because I could ignore it, except at crucial "pivot points" when one "click" would insure accuracy. As another musician pointed out to me, "If you can't hear the click track, you know your timing is right." If you're locked into the tempo, your good timekeeping covers up the sound of the click.

The results are very satisfying. With all there is to keep in mind while recording a basic track, doubts about meter can be set aside in favor of concentrating on execution, dynamics, *andfeel.* I am certain that my confidence and smooth rhythmic flow are only enhanced by it, and recording with the click has definitely improved my overall sense of time, which pays off in live performance as well.

Anyone who has ever tried to accompany a digital sequencer will know that it's just like the electronic metronome: It won't follow *you;* you've got to follow it.. In "Vital Signs," the sequencer is playing a sixteenth-note pattern for most of the song, while the bass plays eighth notes along with it, and the guitar and drums play alternate staccato rhythms.

There have been many interesting things done with drum machines lately. As a thing apart, the artificial drum sounds are very good. Not better. Not worse. But, a completely different thing. I have a technical aversion to dealing with wires and electronics (my technical relationship to drums is hitting them with a stick!), but I wanted to use that sound. So, we set about making real drums sound like artificial ones. I suppose that's akin to making wood look like plastic, but it seemed like the right thing to



do! We used it for the short bridge which introduces the first chorus of "Vital Signs," and in contrast to all the other stylistic influences used in this song, I think it worked quite well.

Conceptually, this song was an attempt to bridge the gap between the primal appeal of the rhythmic reggae "bounce" and the electronic energy of high-technology music. As a drummer, this gave me the opportunity to begin as a simple "groove" player, and then grow through various developments into the "overplaying show-off type" toward the end! I drew on many influences throughout this progression: notably the works of Creme and Godley, Ultravox, The Police, the great things that Michael Giles did with early King Crimson, a healthy dose of good old hard rock, and a little Caribbean influence.

One thing I have come to learn about influences is that although copying one style can never be original, copying many styles often *is* original. Over the years I have learned from big band drummers, progressive jazz drummers, r&b drummers, jazz/rock drummers, pop drummers, reggae drummers, session drummers, rock drummers, and even some pretty lousy drummers. I know that when I add them all together I am none of them, but I am all of them. Some drummers provide instruction, some influence, and the rare great ones provide inspiration. The important thing is that if you listen to good, honest music, you are attending the greatest school of music there is. I'm certainly not going to knock the systematic pursuit of academic knowledge, but it's often the emotional response of *wanting* to learn how to play something you enjoy *listening* to that will teach you the most.

The best advice for someone who wants to develop an original style is: Don't copy one drummer, copy *twenty*!

I copied a hundred.

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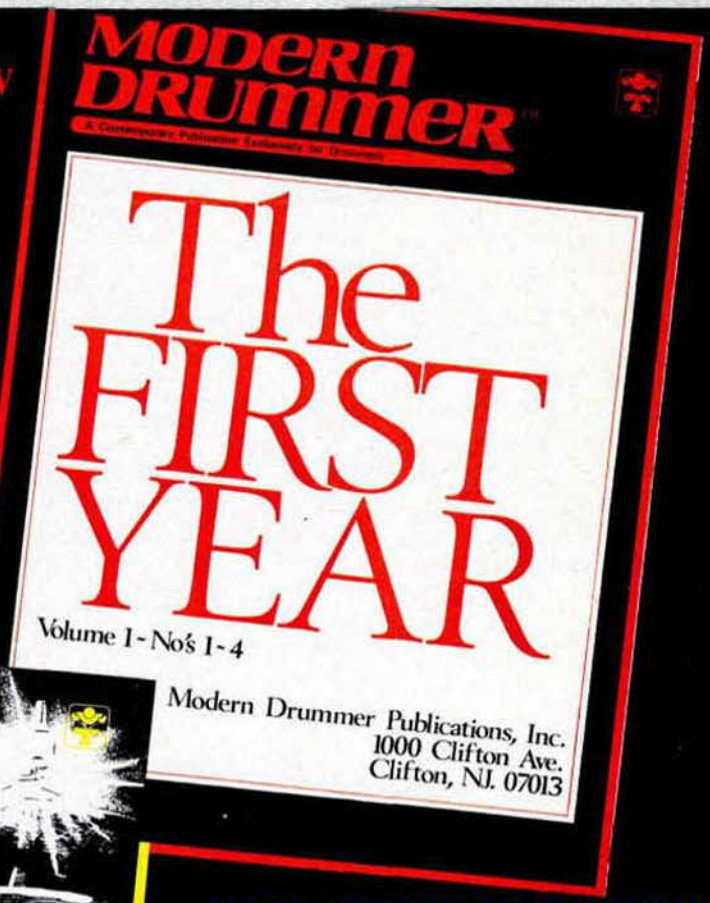

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Kevin Dippold
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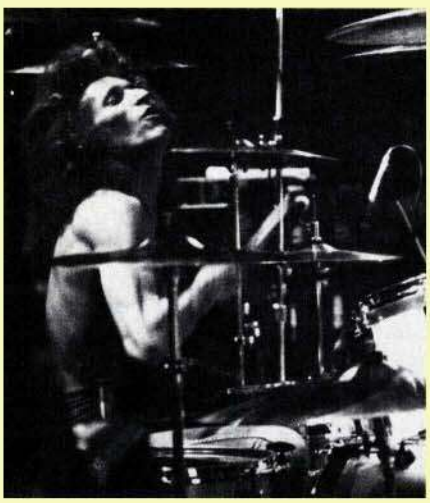


Photo by Bill Crump

A. I'm using old Sonor Super Champions. They don't make them anymore; they've changed the design on them. It's not the one with the rubber on the footboard because I like my foot to slide on the footboard. My pedals have a metal footboard. It's a terrible-action footpedal, but they last forever, and I've found a way to get around the terrible action. I've used one pair for eight years now. Not one strap has broken. I've never oiled them or anything. It has a slow action because of the large size of the cam that the strap wraps around. I set them up very loosely with a long, long stroke—the beater's way back from the head—and I use real heavy Sonor wood beaters. You have to play like I play. Nobody else can play my pedals the way I have them set up. You have to play back real far on the footboard rather than up toward the front. Then you can get a really good hard "whack" at them, and really get the speed.

BUTCH MILES

Q. I have a musical problem revolving around a certain musical drumming sound, associated with the style of Count Basie and early jazzmen like Gene Krupa. It involves the sound of the stick striking the upper shaft of the hi-hat stand with the left hand, while the right-hand stick plays on tight/closed hi-hat cymbals. I've tried all I know to get the ringing sound, but generally get only a dull "clunk."

Paul C. Young
Melbourne, Australia

A. I used that sound a great deal when I was with Basie. I used the left hand holding the stick (traditionally) in the normal standard position. The hi-hat cymbals are closed and the left thumb is on top of the hi-hat cymbals, and the remainder of the hand and the stick is under the hi-hat. The butt is sort of pointing over my left shoulder and the bead is pointing down toward the floor. I'd play a standard swing rhythm on the closed hi-hats with my right hand, with the left stick hitting somewhere in the middle or upper section of the shoulder of the stick on 2 and 4. Sometimes you'll have to vary the angle of the stick in order to get a good ringing sound.

Gene Krupa used a thing when he wanted to get more sound—and I did too—of playing on the closed hi-hats with the right hand stick, and taking the left hand totally away from the hi-hat, holding it with the butt-end forward using matched grip and striking the shaft of the hi-hat, not holding onto the hi-hat cymbals at all. That'll give you more power.

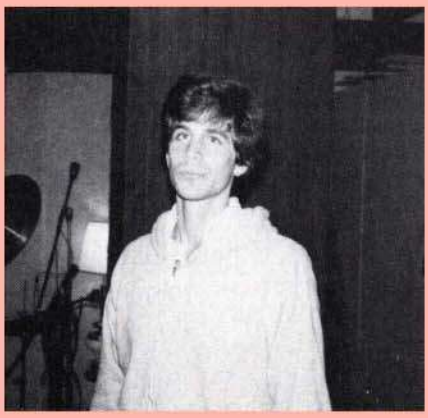
Another method is pretty standard, where the left hand is turned around, upside down, so that the butt-end is facing forward and the bead is pointing back to you. The thumb is still on top of the hi-hat cymbals, but the rest of the hand is underneath the hi-hat, and you're swinging the butt of the stick on 2 and 4 and hitting the bottom bell of the hi-hat. Buddy Rich and Louie Bellson use that an awful lot. I think Jo Jones probably invented it.

At one time I found the Rogers hi-hat stands with the thick shafts gave more of a ring because they had more metal and more space on the inside.

ANDY NEWMARK

Q. Could you tell me what kind of drums you are using and their sizes? Thanks so much.

MikeStreeto
Branford, CT



A. They are Slingerland drums, with a 24" bass drum, an 8x12 mounted tom, a 16x16 floor tom, and a Ludwig 5 1/2X14 chrome snare drum. I use Remo Ambassador *white coated heads, top and bottom. My cymbal set-up consists of a 20" ride cymbal, two 18" crash cymbals, and 14" hi-hat cymbals. They are all Zildjians.*

My set-up looks very old-fashioned by today's standards of lots of tom-toms and cymbals, but I like my four-piece set. It feels a lot less encumbering. When there are two toms in front of you, they can give a feeling of overpowering you, like they are coming up to eat you. Whereas with one tom, there seems to be less clutter in front of you. You can position that one tom much differently than when you have two. It creates a different feeling; a different attitude. And I can finally put my ride cymbal in a comfortable position. For years, I had it several feet up in the air, but now it's down low, where that other tom-tom used to be. It feels comfortable. For years I had been struggling to keep my arm up in the air.

This set is very applicable to studio stuff. The only thing missing is if a producer specifically wants those fills you hear on records with six drums or something. But if a producer doesn't specifically ask for that, I've never had anyone come up and say, "Why aren't you using more toms?" If I don't bring it up, no one ever notices, so the set is fine for me. It's never been a problem.

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by Robyn Flans

What happens after a situation to which you are accustomed and in which you feel comfortable and secure, comes to an end? Just one week after the Doobie Brothers' final show as a band, **Chet McCracken** revealed, "There are a lot of mixed emotions. It feels like I went to college for four years and now I'm out on the streets, and in that way, it's exciting. At the same time, it's sad because it's the best band I've ever been in and it may be the best band I'll ever be in. We were brothers in a lot of ways and to have it end is sad, for I may never experience that again. I'm just thankful I had it once. Right now I'm looking for something to challenge me musically."

After four years with the band, Chet is not certain as to the approach he must now take to secure work, other than calling past accounts, but at least he feels much more prepared from the benefits of the Doobie experience. "I'm much more confident with my groove. That's one thing working with another drummer in a band helps. Keith [Knudsen] knows how to just sit and lay down 2 and 4 and make it feel great. When I came into the band, it was, 'L.A. session musician, jazz player.' I could play real fast and flashy but I had to settle down and just cop that groove. The Doobie Brothers' music was a lot different from what I had been doing so I definitely feel much more prepared and more mature, and I have a ten-times better groove to go out and do sessions."

He is, however, looking forward to being the only drummer in a situation because, "I feel as though I have these new skills and I want to try them out. Once in a while, though, I've had thoughts of putting my own band together to just have fun playing around L.A., and I've thought about having another drummer because it was such a great experience. I found out what it really can be besides just a lot of guys on the backbeat."

Writing and producing are areas in which he plans to become more involved and already he has become involved in a few production deals. Also, somewhere in the future, he plans a solo project, but feels he needs to develop his writing more first. Since he also plays vibes, that instrument best complements his writing skills. And recently, Chet completed cutting tracks for Stephane Winslow, who also cut one of Chet's tunes, called "Showdown."

''There are a lot of unknowns right now, but I'm excited about those. I've been dealing with them all my life. Most musicians either learn how to deal with it or get out of the business."

Ralph Cooper, with Air Supply, is currently in the studio with the band in Australia, their homeland. Coming from a jazz background, Cooper says, "I consider Air Supply a commercial band. Up to the point of joining them four years ago, I hadn't really played any commercial music which was something I wanted to do. It was a challenge and when I heard the songs, I felt they would work and it would be a success. Here we get into the argument of what is art and what is not. These days, there are so many people doing so many different things, both simple and complicated. I believe it's a challenge to do any kind of music on a professional level. It's a matter of attitude. I could be sitting here grumbling saying, 'I wish I could do more,' but I think if you're playing in a particular idiom and it demands a particular style, that's what you should be doing. I'm interested in being musically correct, not in doing something that might make me look like I have three arms but sounds silly in that context."

Of the present Australian music scene, Ralph explains, "The state of the industry has improved a couple of hundred percent in Australia since the Little River Band's and Air Supply's success. Gradually, a couple more eyes and ears have been turned towards there. There's a lot of rock 'n' roll in Australia and there is a particular flavor to the music. I think being an Australian band and to succeed internationally, you have to be involved in music that isn't too close to home and that will have an international appeal. I think the reason why Air Supply succeeded where others haven't is because the music is appealing to other countries."

New York percussionist **Sue Hadjopoulos** has been on tour with Joe Jackson for several months and currently, they are in Europe. Accustomed to playing sessions primarily, she says, "I like doing the freelance session work because you never know what you're going to have to do and it keeps you on your toes. There's also something nice about working with a set band with a set repertoire where you have set parts. Yet, that's different every night also and you might stretch out in different ways.

"What was great about Joe's music was that prior to this, he had never used a percussionist before. For the new album, he decided he wanted to do something more percussive, so he wrote material more percussive, yet there was room for me to create. There had never been any percussion on the old material, so that was interesting also because I had the freedom to create parts that went with those songs. We do a lot of material from the old albums and they're now all rearranged, not to mention that we now have two keyboard players and no guitar. I really enjoy being able to listen to a song and create the part and Joe was great about that. He had certain ideas as to what he wanted, but he was completely open to my ideas. That includes surfaces as well, because not only do you have the rhythm, but you have to decide what instrument you hear it on also."

Tris Imboden currently in Munich, Germany, recording Christine McVie's solo project. **Gene Dunlap** releasing solo album on Capitol this month. **Mike Baird** on some tracks of Patrick Simmons' debut solo album. **Eddie Tuduri** now in Canada-based band, The Lincolns. Black Sabbath drummer **Bill Ward** has formed a new band. **Michael Botts** on an album by New Zealand artist, Sharon O'Neil, due out shortly. **Vinnie Colaiuta** played some tracks for upcoming Helen Reddy, Barry Manilow and Paul Anka albums. **Jim Keltner** worked on some of the music for the sound track for the film *King Of Comedy.* Percussionist **Emedin Rivera** has joined **Roland Vazquez'** band. **Don Murray,** original drummer with the Turtles, is now with the regrouped Surfaris. **Mat Marucci's** album *Extensity,* recorded live at Carmelo's jazz club in L.A., was released on Marco Records. **Don Moye** has recently completed European tours with both his Quintet and the Art Ensemble of Chicago, as well as a U.S. tour with the Ensemble and a mid-December tour of Nigeria with his Quintet. **Mark Craney** on European tour with Gino Vannelli. **Tony Bronegal** on Alex Call's new project. **Peter Bunetta** co-produced and played drums on David Andersen's album due out shortly on Arista. Little River Band with **Derek Pellicci** on drums will be releasing a new album soon. **Eli Konikoff** just winding up lengthy tour with Spyro Gyra. Congratulations to Earth, Wind & Fire percussionist **Ralph Johnson,** whose wife gave birth to a baby boy in September. **Mel Lewis** & The Jazz Orchestra currently touring the West Coast and Canada, after which they go to Australia for a couple of weeks.

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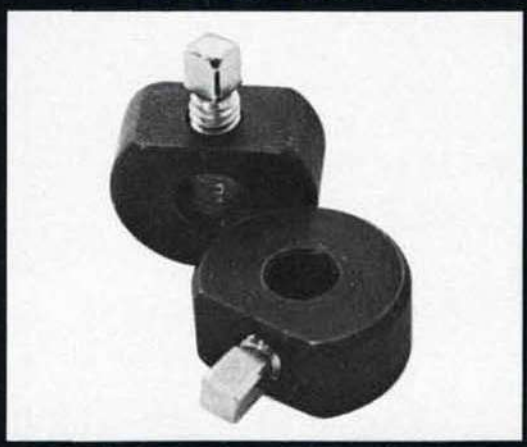

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INDUSTRY HAPPENINGS

MAT MARUCCI AND GRETSCH

Drummer/Composer Mat Marucci has recently signed as an endorsee with the Gretsch Drum Company. Marucci is a producer/artist for Marco Records and has had four albums released which have made the Top-10 in jazz airplay. A fifth album is in the works which will feature Bobby Shew (trumpet) and Frank Strazzeri (piano) along with Mat.

Mat can be reached c/o Marco Records, 11020 Ventura Blvd., Suite 252, Studio City, Ca. 91604.

PEARL OPENS WEST COAST DISTRIBUTION CENTER

Howie Oliver has been appointed manager of Pearl International's new warehouse/showroom in North Hollywood, California. Located at 7629 Fulton Avenue just off Saticoy St., the 5,000 square foot facility will provide dealers in the thirteen western states with lower shipping costs and quicker service on Pearl's new export series outfits, stands, electronic products, and flutes. In addition, a showroom displaying all Pearl products will be open to artists as well as dealers for demonstration purposes.

Howie brings to Pearl over twenty years of experience in the music industry working with professional musicians in customizing and servicing their percussion equipment. "We are fortunate in having a person with Howie's experience join our team," announced Walt Johnston, President of Pearl International.

DRUM WORKSHOP ANNOUNCES EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

As part of their ongoing efforts to better serve the drumming community, Drum Workshop, Inc. is proud to announce the formation of their new Education Department. DW's educational services combine an active clinic program and a series of "Master Class" fact sheets by leading percussion artists.

The current list of "Master Class" fact sheets include: Nick Ceroli (Big Band Interpretation), John Hernandez (Drumming In the '80s), Fred Gruber (Finding The Right Teacher), Burleigh Drummond (Using Your Influences), John Ferraro (Building A Career), Colin Bailey (Bass Drum Technique) and Sinclair Lott (Puttine It In The Pocket). This literature is available at no charge through Music stores supporting D.W. products, or you may write Drum Workshop.

For further information contact: Drum Workshop at 2697 Lavery Ct., Unit 16, Newbury Park, CA. 91320 (805) 499-6863.

ARMANDO PERAZA & LP

Armando Peraza, conga and bongo specialist whose work with George Shearing and Cal Tjader created some of the most exciting moments in Latin jazz, has become one of LP's latest endorsees. His current work with Santana has won him fans in every sphere of musical influence. The drums he uses are LP's *Galaxy.*

BLAINE GOLD

Hal Blaine, who has a collection of 182 gold records and albums from various artists he has worked for during his career, is shown here with a specially made gold album, commemorating every John Denver album Hal has drummed on over the last eight years. Hal will start work soon on a biography, assisted by author Robyn Flans.

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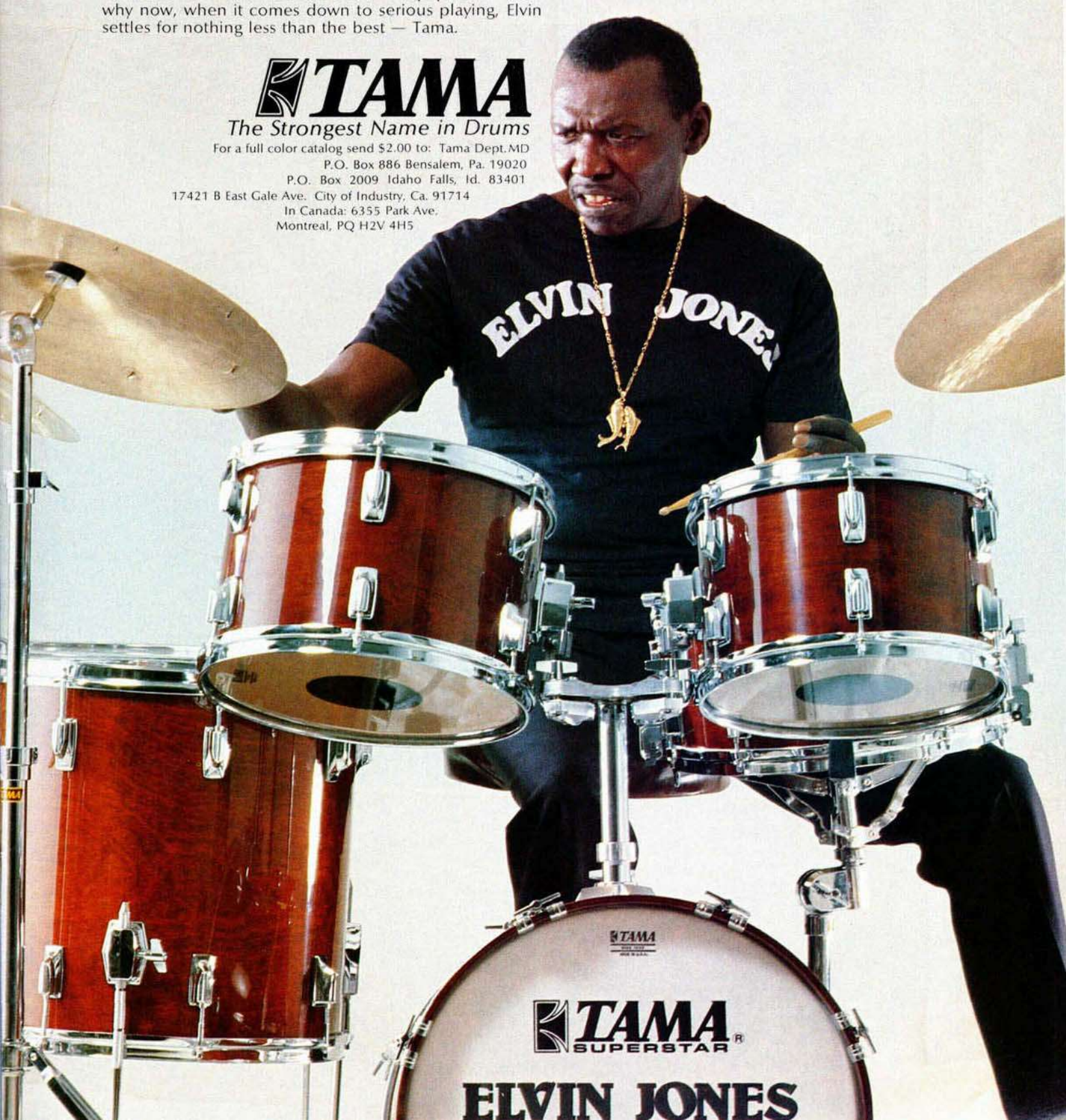


NEW OVAL HEAD BASS DRUM

Breaking traditional design conventions, Migirian Drum Company of Detroit, Michigan, has unveiled a totally new line of bass drums. Resulting from eight years of development, they feature easy integration into existing drumsets. The company holds U.S. and foreign patents for the new product.

With an "oval head," rectangular high-density fiberglass body and a snap-in/snap-out louvered sound-directing face, Migirian bass drums are unique. According to the firm, research has proved the oval head used in combination with the deep rectangular shell and louvered face produces a heavier, fuller sound.

Offered in two sizes (club or concert), they accept most tom-tom mounting hardware and all current foot pedals. Tuning claws are solid-cast aircraft-grade aluminum, buffed to a high sheen. They provide stable head-tuning through rotation of eight hex-head bolts. Hex-head wrench keys are included with each unit. For easy access and convenience, two channels are molded into the drum-shell top for placement of stationary sticks. To hold the drum firmly on carpets and reduce smooth-floor-surface shifting, four 6" long non-slip pads are attached to the shell's underside.

All Migirian Bass Drums are finished with durable DuPont *Imron* polyurethane enamel. Replacement heads are available from the manufacturer.

For more information write: Migirian Drum Company, P.O. Box 2524, Detroit, Michigan 48202.

NEW PREMIER DRUMHEADS

Soon to be available for full distribution, is a totally new range of drumheads called *Twinskins.* This new red range is in sizes to suit all drums and will appeal particularly to rock bands, studio musicians, and marching bands (for timp toms and bass drums) because the heads produce a very powerful, but flat, sound that needs very little damping. Projection and clarity of sound are excellent.

Slightly thinner than normal laminates, the two independent layers of material are separated by Premier's black doughnut patch which creates a tapered airgap between the two surfaces.

XL TAMBOURINE

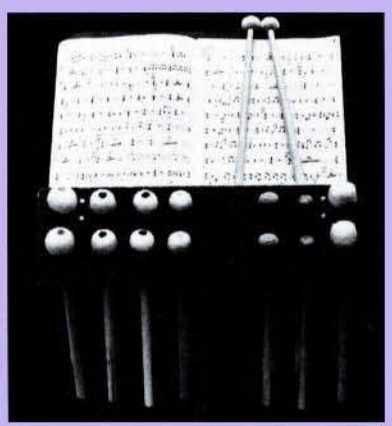
XL Specialty Percussion is proud to announce the availability of the XL tambourine. The XL tambourine (designed by Harlan) features hand-hammered German-silver jingles in both a tempered or untempered style, durable maple shell, and calf-skin heads. The XL tambourine is ideal for both symphonic and studio playing and is available from select dealers, or write: XL Specialty Percussion, 1701 North Harrison Street, Fort Wayne, IN 46808.

BILL KRAFT TIMPANI MALLETS AND RACK

The Bill Kraft Timpani Mallets have been designed and developed for plastic heads, and achieve the sound reminiscent of calfskin heads. The shaft is the highest quality hickory and the felt is of a very high density which makes these mallets extremely durable. They are individually matched for compatibility of sound and balance. The heads are "ball type" and are seamless.

The Mallet Rack is designed to hold eight pair of timpani mallets. It sits on the music stand so there's no more turning away from the conductor or worrying about mallets falling off a table.

For more info and a free brochure: David Gaston, 3563 Orange Ave., Long Beach, CA 90807.



STUDIO SNARES

The Drum Equipment Company, a New York-based firm, is introducing *Studio Snares,* replacement snares especially designed for recording and for general use.

Studio Snares eliminate undesirable snare vibrations and evoke that "wet" studio sound. These snares have a $15.95 retail value and may be purchased at your local music store, or directly by mail from the Drum Equipment Company, 304 W. 18th Street, New York City 10011.

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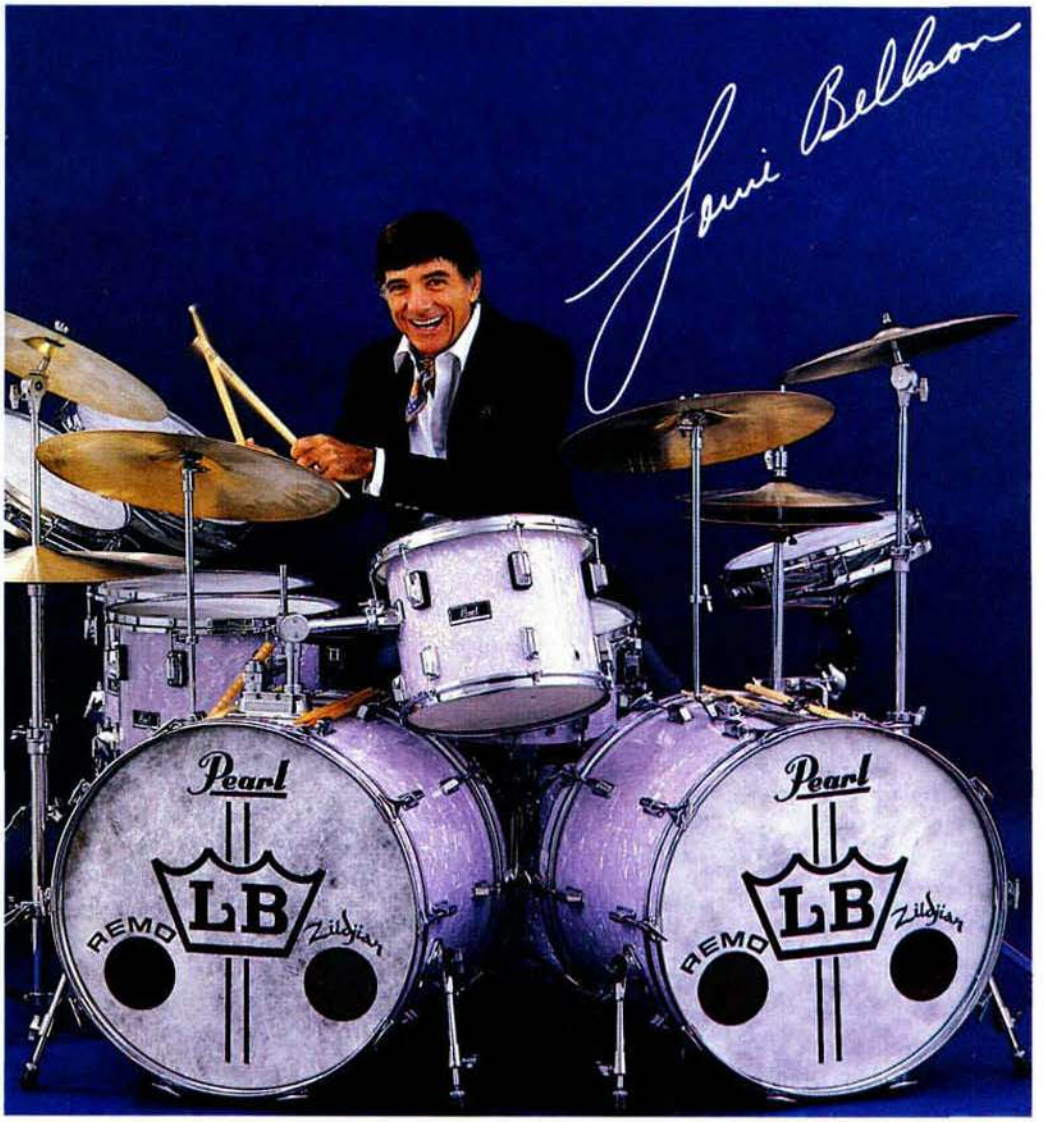

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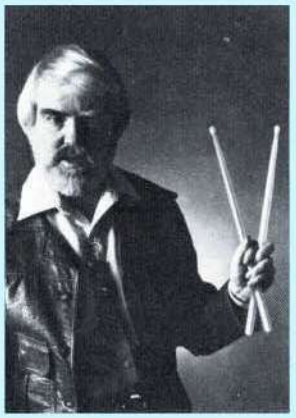
For more information write for free catalog & logo stickers: Danmar Percussion Products, 13026 Saticoy St., N. Hollywood, CA 91605.

CC BRUSHES FROM LP

LP is proud to announce distribution rights for CC Professional Drum Brushes. These brushes are available in a standard light version for an easy, mellow sound in jazz, country & western and small group music and also in a heavy version for a brighter, sharper, penetrating sound in rock, marching and big bands.

AQUARIAN VALUELINE STICKS



Aquarian Accessories has responded to the call from students for a durable synthetic drumstick at a reasonable cost. According to Roy Burns, VP of Marketing, "Our new *ValueLine* sticks were designed for young students on a budget. Many professional features are included, such as Aquarian's patented satin-textured grip, pro balance and four unique models."

ValueLine drumsticks are molded in one piece for maximum durability. Less than twice the cost of wood, *Value Line* sticks will outlast wood many times. Models include: *Medium Rock, Soul, New Wave* and *Heavy Rock.*

THE GATO DRUM

The Gato Drum was designed and built by Hy Kloc and is based on the same principle as the hollow log drum. The designer wanted an instrument he could play without taking lessons. Children enjoy them as a learning tool or toy. The drum has also been used in music therapy for handicapped people and children with learning disabilities. Professionals such as Chick Corea, Earth, Wind & Fire, Carlos Santana and Yes now include the Gato Drum with their percussion instruments.

The top piece of the drum is all mahogany and the sound chamber is clear redwood. The different lengths of wood on top create the sound. The longer the piece, the lower the tone. The drum is all handmade, even the mallets which have tips made of *Superballs.* The drum is finished with a coat of hand-rubbed furniture oil. The tone gets better as the drum is played because wood mellows with age and use. Weather has no effect on the drum (unless it's left out in the rain).

For more information: Hy Kloc Enterprises, Inc., PO Box 208, 2007 Sterns Ave., Kalamazoo, MI 49005.

CALZONE INTRODUCES NEW ESCORT CASE LINE

Calzone Case Company is pleased to announce the introduction of the new *Escort Line* of cases. A truly unique "flight case," *Escort* features the patented Calzone Double-Angle Construction for greater strength and support. These cases are constructed of furniture-grade plywood (no knots for maximum structural integrity) and a heavy-grade formica laminate.

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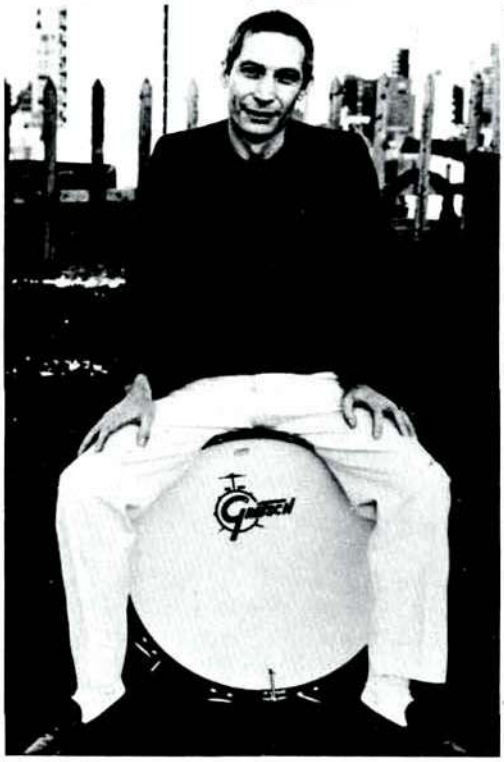

Tony Williams, Drummer

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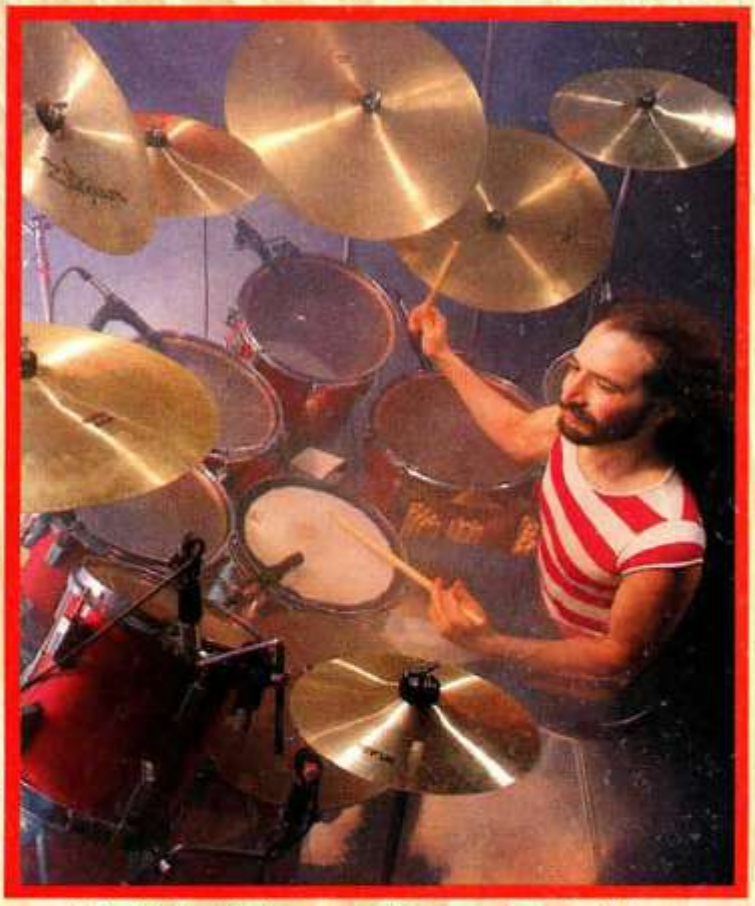
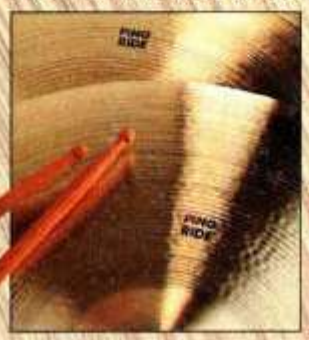
Steve grew up just around the corner from The Zildjian factory. Of course, for the past few years he hasn't been around all that much, what with his touring with Jean Luc Ponty, Ronnie Montrose and of course the enormously successful group, Journey. However, recently Steve took a break in his wild schedule and had a chance to sit down and talk with us.



Flying high with the success of Journey, Steve Smith is one of the most versatile and talented drummers in music today.

On Starting Out. "I started out playing in the fourth grade when I was nine years old and had a really good teacher. When I was in high school I got serious about playing and I got a job as a paper boy to save money to buy cymbals. My teacher used to bring me to the Zildjian factory so I could go in and pick out my own set of cymbals."

On Rock and Roll. "After college I had a lot of experience playing jazz and fusion and I had virtually no experience playing rock and roll professionally except for some high school rock things. I really wanted to follow that direction, because nowadays a drummer has to play rock and roll as well as jazz in order to be well-rounded as a musician."



On Zildjians. "The kind of music we play with Journey demands a lot of power. I've found that the cymbals in the Zildjian rock line are the only ones that can really do the job for me—that can carry the big halls and not sound thin. Zildjian cymbals have extraordinary projection but at the same time they have this wonderful, full musical tone. I also particularly like the Ping Ride—I got my first one back in the eighth grade and I've been playing one ever since."

On Career. "You know if you should get into music. It's something you can just feel. If you have to ask yourself the question, then don't bother. Being a musician isn't just a career it's a way of life.

"I find that most successful musicians don't think about success as much as they think about being a good player or songwriter. To try to focus on success is a little too contrived and usually just doesn't work."

If you're a serious drummer, chances are overwhelming that you, like Steve, are already playing Zildjians. Zildjian: a line of cymbals played by drummers on six continents—a line of cymbal-makers that spans three centuries.

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